

America's interest, certainly not the pro-American liberal democracy that we have talked about.

Neither of those options, most importantly, will be worth the cost of the thousands more of American men and women who will lose their lives, the tens of thousands who will be seriously wounded or the hundreds of billions of dollars that we will have to borrow to finance this war. This resolution is not in America's interest, and it should be defeated.

#### HONORING MATT MAUPIN

(Mrs. SCHMIDT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. SCHMIDT. Mr. Speaker, as we focus on the global war on terror, I am reminded of the brave actions of our military, including Matt Maupin, the only soldier missing and captured in Iraq on April 9, 2004.

Matt and his family live in my district. His parents, Keith and Carolyn Maupin, continue to support our military through their yellow ribbon campaign, sending literally thousands of boxes of food and other items to Iraq and Afghanistan for our brave men and women.

Please continue to pray for Matt and all who are fighting for us.

#### DECLARING THAT THE UNITED STATES WILL PREVAIL IN THE GLOBAL WAR ON TERROR

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 868, proceedings will now resume on the resolution (H. Res. 861) declaring that the United States will prevail in the Global War on Terror, the struggle to protect freedom from the terrorist adversary.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. When proceedings were postponed on Thursday, June 15, 2006, 61 minutes of debate remained on the resolution.

The Committee on International Relations has 2 minutes remaining, the Committee on Armed Services has 5½ minutes remaining, the Committee on the Judiciary has 23 minutes remaining, and the minority leader's designee has 30½ minutes remaining.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield the remainder of our time to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. GERLACH) with whom I had the honor of visiting our troops in Afghanistan and Iraq, the front line of the war on terror.

Mr. GERLACH. I thank the gentleman from Florida.

Mr. Speaker, I think most of us understand we must succeed in Iraq if we are to win this global war on terror. Like any war, we may not want to be there, but now we must successfully complete the task before us.

It is not and will not be easy. But as one said, there is no substitute for victory. We must prevail. But at the same

time, we also need to make it undeniably clear to the Iraqi Government that our patience and support are not blank checks that can be cashed with American lives and tax dollars ad infinitum.

To do that properly and effectively, it is imperative that the Congress do its job to proactively and comprehensively evaluate the current level of progress of the Iraqi Government and clearly report its findings on an ongoing basis to the American people.

By doing so, we would be firmly pushing the Iraqis themselves to continue their efforts to stand up and take charge of their destiny. The American people are looking to us to answer their questions on how much progress is being made, what are the Iraqis themselves willing to do to fight for their freedom, and when will the men and women come home.

For this very reason, I recently introduced a resolution calling on certain House and Senate committees to evaluate and issue specific findings and conclusions on the progress of the Iraqi Government to take over operational control to maintain proper civil order, to foster economic growth and self-sufficiency and preserve the Iraqi people's freedoms as set forth in their Constitution.

It is my firm belief that if this fact-finding and reporting process is undertaken, it will set the stage for further evaluation and consensus-building both inside and outside of Congress on our role in Iraq and will go a long way to ensure that our future involvement there continues to be the right policy, both for Iraq and America.

Mr. MURTHA. I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. SKELTON).

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Speaker, as a member of the Armed Services Committee, through the years I have had the opportunity to visit and watch those in uniform as they trained, as they sailed aboard ship. I have visited with them in difficult places through the years, most recently in Iraq and Afghanistan. I must tell you how immensely proud I am of those young men and young women who wear the uniform of the United States.

We asked for a debate on the issue of Iraq. We were led to believe that we would be debating and discussing at length the issue of Iraq. Then the resolution was put forward for us, which we are discussing today, which is a shotgun blast all across the Middle East and its problems and terrorism, and a footnote is Iran.

So we should be discussing the future of our young people as they proceed in Iraq, not everywhere else, because the issue we thought was before us was that. I must tell you that I take a back seat to no one in providing for the troops, the young people in uniform and their families, because their families are so very, very important. Having members of my family in uniform, I understand the importance thereof.

Sadly, this is not about Iraq. Last year this Congress drafted, and the President signed into law, words that said calendar year 2006 should be a period of significant transition to full Iraqi sovereignty, with Iraqi security forces taking the lead for the security of a free and sovereign Iraq, thereby creating the conditions for the phased redeployment of United States forces from Iraq.

That is what we should be discussing. It should be narrow, intellectual discussion, a serious discussion about that country and its future, full sovereignty transition to their government and how it is being stood up, how their security forces and Iraqi police forces are being stood up, and how we are training them and also creating conditions for the phased redeployment of American forces from that country.

That is the law of the land, signed by the President, passed by this Congress. That is in conflict with the resolution before us. As we say back home, they have done gee and haw together very well. But the law of the land is what we should be discussing today and all the parts thereof.

But what concerns me most of all is at the end of the day, what about the future of our military? Our forces will come out of this effort seriously strained, both in personnel and in equipment. The equipment in Iraq is wearing out two to nine times the peace time rate. Some equipment has added as much as 27 years' worth of wear and tear in the last 3 years in Iraq. We must continue to fund defense requirements to meet unpredictable future security needs.

Mr. COBLE. Mr. Speaker, after I recognize the distinguished gentleman from Virginia, I ask unanimous consent that the distinguished gentleman from California (Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN), who sits on the Judiciary Committee, be allowed to control the remaining time on our side.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from North Carolina?

There was no objection.

Mr. COBLE. Mr. Speaker, I am now pleased to recognize for 3 minutes the distinguished gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GOODLATTE) who chairs the House Agriculture Committee and who sits on the House Judiciary Committee.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, just over 3 years ago the world watched as a treacherous tyrant disregarded United Nations resolutions and burrowed into the bunkers of Baghdad. Within a short period of time, coalition forces dismantled Saddam Hussein's regime, which was built on fear, murders, assassinations, torture and lies. And today this despotic dictator stands on trial before the Iraqi people in a courtroom that is a stone's throw from his prison cell.

While insurgents and terrorists continue their attempts to dismantle the progress that the Iraqi people have made, our resolution to see a free Iraq

must remain as strong as ever. Iraqis have also demonstrated their commitment to rebuilding their nation from the ashes of tyranny by their overwhelming participation in three democratic elections.

On the eve of completion of Iraq's democratically elected government, coalition forces and Iraqi police tracked down and killed the man Osama bin Laden referred to as the prince of al Qaeda in Iraq, Abu Musab al Zarqawi. Zarqawi led one of the bloodiest insurgent groups in Iraq in a bloody campaign of shootings, bombings, beheadings and kidnappings aimed at derailing democracy in Iraq.

America is the world's leader in laying the foundations for freedom and future peace. We have stood for the spread of democracy around the world. We believe in it and have stood for it, not only for ourselves, for Europeans, Latin Americans, Asians and Africans. We have stood for it in the Middle East for the Israelis and now for Arabs in the wider Muslim world, in Afghanistan and in Iraq.

With our leadership ideals that have inspired our history, freedom, democracy and human dignity are increasingly inspiring individuals in nations throughout the world, because free nations tend toward peace. The advance of liberty will make America more secure.

Americans have felt the sting of the terrorist threat on our own soil, and we must make clear that we are dedicated to preventing any future attacks by tracking and eliminating terrorist threats. America is more secure today, thanks to the brave men and women of our Armed Forces whose dedication, patriotism and bravery are helping advance freedom and democracy in Iraq and around the world.

President Bush said it best while speaking to our troops during his recent visit to Iraq: this is a moment, this is a time where the world can turn one way or the other, where the world can be a better place or a more dangerous place. The United States of America and citizens such as yourselves are dedicated to making sure that the world we leave behind is a better place for all. Support freedom, support peace, support our troops, support this resolution.

□ 0930

Mr. MURTHA. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. ETHERIDGE) for a unanimous consent request.

(Mr. ETHERIDGE asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ETHERIDGE. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to add my voice to the debate on this resolution on Iraq. I will vote for House Resolution 861 because I strongly support our troops.

Mr. Speaker, I recently returned from Iraq, which was my second trip to that war zone. I am tremendously proud of all the men and

women serving there, especially all the North Carolinians who have served and continue to serve there. I am pleased that we have made progress in training the Iraqi military to begin to provide for that country's security needs. Unfortunately, there is a great deal of work to be done to train Iraqi police, government and other civil institutions that are critical to a stable and functioning society. There is a long way to go to make Iraq a sustainable, peaceful country, and the administration must change course to build coalitions with our allies and all peaceful nations of the world to cooperate in rebuilding Iraq.

Although I strongly support our troops, I have serious concerns about the administration's current policies regarding Iraq. I believe the ultimate goal must be victory in Iraq. We need more burden-sharing support from other countries because the whole world has a tremendous stake in a stable Iraq and a peaceful Middle East. The administration must do a better job of providing for our soldiers in the field and our veterans and military families here at home. Specifically, the communities surrounding Fort Bragg in my district need more Federal funds to build new schools to meet the needs of the children of our servicemembers. I have voted every time to approve the funds to rebuild Iraq, but if we can spend billions of American tax dollars on building new roads, water treatment plants and schools in Iraq, we can invest some public resources in our urgent infrastructure needs here at home.

Congress has played a critical role in issues like providing armor for our troops and their vehicles, improving pay and incentives for better recruitment and retention of our troops and care for their families and creating the Homeland Security Department to protect our people from the threat of terrorist attack. I call on Congress to reject the administration's proposed cuts to our vital National Guard, and I will continue to work on the U.S. House Committee on Homeland Security to support our first responders who keep our people safe.

I will vote for this resolution because I support our troops, but I have serious concerns both with certain provisions in the resolution and the administration's approach to Iraq. Specifically, the resolution states support for the goal of a "unified Iraq." I do not believe that the Congress should dictate the contours of the map of the Middle East. As long as they do so in a peaceful manner, the Iraqi people should be free to decide whether or not unity, confederation or independence is the best form of government to meet their needs. And the administration's failed approach of going it alone and refusing to hold high level officials accountable for clear mistakes must end. Stubbornness is not a strategy and slogans will not win this conflict.

Let me state clearly that last week's elimination of terrorist leader Abu Musab Al Zarqawi by American special forces is an important accomplishment. I commend our military personnel who carried out the operation. This success points out the importance of human intelligence methods and demonstrates the usefulness of offering awards of large sums of money for information on America's enemies. This success stands in sharp contrast to the administration's continued failure to find Osama bin Laden. We should immediately double the bounty on bin Laden and continue to increase it at regular intervals until the terrorist mastermind is defeated.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, I regret the partisan manner in which this resolution has been brought to this floor, which my North Carolina colleague Republican Congressman WALTER JONES has rightly termed "a charade." From the very beginning, the Bush White House and Republican congressional leadership have exploited the Iraq war for partisan gain. I believe the blood of our soldiers should be off limits for political gamesmanship, and with more than 20,000 American soldiers killed or wounded in Iraq, the American people deserve better than petty politics on this issue.

I will vote for this resolution because I support our troops, but we can do so much better.

Mr. MURTHA. Mr. Speaker, I believe myself as much time as I may consume.

I want to go over a couple of things here that some of it was talked about yesterday and I said we need a plan. We also need a change of direction.

Now, why do I say we need a change of direction? A number of people brought up Beirut. I remember being on the floor, and the Speaker of the House asked me to go to Beirut after the President had deployed 1,400 troops to Beirut. Go over to Beirut, see what is going on. I did.

A friend of mine who had been in Vietnam with me was there, the commanding officer, and the rules we engaged in were very loose. Only had 1,400 people, did not even have people on the high ground to protect themselves. They were shooting down at the Marines down in the valley.

I came back and I told the President, I told Weinberger, I told Tip O'Neill, you have got to get them out of there. They did not, 241 Marines were killed.

The President saw it was a mistake; he changed direction. One thing about President Reagan, he understood when to change. He understood when you change direction. He had one of the biggest tax cuts in the history of Congress, and then he had one of the biggest tax increases. People forget he had a tax increase because he wanted to change direction.

He changed directions in Central America. I supported him. They burned me in effigy back at home because I supported Reagan all through the Central American thing, but we came to compromise in the end, and he saw we had to change direction and he did.

What I am saying today, Somalia, I told President Bush I, do not go into Somalia because if you go into Somalia you will not be able to get out. He said to me, I will have them out by inauguration day. He had lost the election by that time. He went in after the election was over, and he said, I will have them out by inauguration day. Well, he did not get them all out by inauguration day, and we changed direction there. We changed direction in the wrong direction. We went after Adide, who was a tribal leader. We sent in special forces. They bungled the thing. They fired the Secretary of Defense. They had accountability, and President Clinton changed direction. We redeployed.

So these are not times to criticize Presidents. This is something that needed to be done.

Now, we are in the same position here. Iraqi civilian deaths, 2003, 250; Iraqi civilian deaths in 2006, 1,500 a month. Went from we are there, we are not someplace else, we are there, and that is how many deaths. Iraqi kidnappings per day, 2003, two; today, there is 35 a day, 35 a day. U.S. troop fatalities, there were 37 in May of 2003; in May of 2006, 68. We are there. We are there as occupiers in Iraq. Iraqi Army police fatalities were 10 in 2003; 149 in May of this year.

Now, this is not progress. We are on the ground with 138,000 troops. The number of estimated insurgents, and I do not know how they find out who they are, but he said there is 3,000, Mr. Speaker, in May of 2003. There is now 20,000 insurgents. Now why did that come about? Because they look at us as occupiers.

Only the Iraqis can solve this problem. The United States cannot solve the problem as a foreign occupier, and our troops are caught in between a civil war.

Daily attacks by insurgents, 2003, there were five per day; today, there is 90. Monthly incidents of sectarian violence, you want to know what sectarian violence is? Sectarian violence is civil war. May 2003, 5; May of 2006, 250. We are there. We are there in the country, and it has increased from 5 to 250.

So do not tell me stay the course is the answer. We need a change in direction. We need to assess this situation and change. All of us want the same solution. We want a stable Middle East. It is important not only to the United States; it is important to the international community.

Bush I worked with the international community, and he got a coalition together, and it was successful, and he knew the limitations of what he could do. He did not go into Iraq, even though there were some zealots who wanted to go into Iraq. He knew, and he said in his book, If I go into Iraq, I will have to occupy it, I will have to reconstruct it, and I will lose the coalition. So he did not go into Iraq, and he was absolutely right. I supported him at the time, even though a lot of people had said they did not support what he was doing.

Somebody yesterday said, oh, you cannot measure the amount of water they have per day, that does not mean anything, the amount of electricity. Let me tell you something. I was without electricity for 8 hours last winter. It is not pleasant. I was cold. Now, it does not get that cold in Iraq, but I was without it for 8 hours and the house got cold. I thought to myself, in Iraq, they only have sometimes 8 to 10 hours of electricity a day. Water, they have 1 hour of water.

There is less oil production than before. Deputy Secretary Wolfowitz said we are going to pay for this with the

oil production. Well, it has fallen far short of that. I think the OMB chairman, I think he at the time predicted this war would cost maybe \$50 billion, and Wolfowitz said it would cost nothing because they would pay for it. Well, right now we have spent \$450 billion. The longer we stay, the more we pay, in lives, in hurt to the families, the more we pay in financial resources.

It took us 15 years to get over the Vietnam War. We had 18 percent interest rates. We had 13 percent unemployment. Through the Reagan administration the Federal Reserve had to increase rates to 21 percent. I remember because at the time I was trying to buy a house. I remember trying to buy it at first, and I said 7 percent, I am not going to pay 7 percent. It went up to 21 percent. So we suffered because it was guns and butter. Here it is the tax cuts and troops in the field paying for the war.

So stay and pay is not a solution. I say redeploy and be ready. Get our troops out of harm's way and put them on the periphery and let the Iraqis settle this themselves. Only the Iraqis can settle this, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 15 seconds just to say I do not dispute the figure given by the gentleman from Pennsylvania. I dispute his logic.

I question the cause-and-effect relationship. Our presence has not created terrorists. Terrorists were around much before that. In the instance he cited with previous Presidents, yes, they did react, but obviously the totality of their reaction did not stop terrorism. We have a different plan, a different approach. That is what this President is following.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Indiana (Mr. PENCE), a member of the Judiciary Committee.

(Mr. PENCE asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PENCE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this resolution and commend the Republican leadership of the House of Representatives for facilitating this extraordinary debate over the war on terror and our military efforts in Iraq.

I have made three trips to Iraq over the last 3 years. I have led delegations to Baghdad, Basra, Ramadi, Balad and Mosul, and I have two messages to contribute to this discussion.

In the course of those trips, I have met with our soldiers in mess halls. I have flown in the belly of C-130s. I have talked with soldiers far away from anyone with any brass on their shoulders, and I have never met a soldier that did not believe in the effort in Iraq. Let me say again, Mr. Speaker, in all of my three different travels throughout the lengths and bounds of Iraq, I have never met a U.S. soldier in uniform

who did not believe in the mission. Each and every one I met believed in the nobility of the cause.

Each of them expressed the view of an Indiana soldier by the name of Jim Newland from Washington, Indiana, in Baghdad. I will never forget the day I said to Jim, what do you think, Jim; are we doing the right thing here? He looked me in the eye and he said, Congressman, we are out on patrol every day on the streets of Baghdad. We look this enemy in the eye every day, and he said to me very solemnly, we have got to stop these people right here. They kill Americans because they like it. That is the sentiment I heard from our soldiers.

My other message is very simply and plainly and humbly, while it will be hard for some around this country to hear, we are winning the war in Iraq. We are defeating the enemy in every engagement. The enemy has never taken down so much as a full platoon in any military engagement. It is an extraordinary credit to our soldiers.

We have had three national elections. We have stood up a quarter of a million Iraqis in uniform, and there is now a freestanding elected government in Iraq. We are winning the war in Iraq, Mr. Speaker. It is a message that I would deliver and from the hearts of the soldiers that I met. I would also say I believe in this mission.

Support the resolution.

Mr. MURTHA. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 2 minutes.

Vietnam is the same thing. I believed in my mission in Vietnam. All of us believed in it, but in 1967 when I came back from Vietnam, they had an election. President Lyndon Johnson said everything's all right. Matter of fact, I have a bullet that they gave me, that the first Marines gave to us when we left there that said everything's all right. We all believed in our mission. That did not mean we were going to win the war. That is the problem.

At times we have to change direction. When we look at the Vietnam War, there was an election right after I came back in 1967, and President Lyndon Johnson said, now it is all over, they will be able to do this themselves. 37,000 Americans killed after that, and you know the results. It was not because of the public. It was because the enemy kept forcing us into the type of war they were fighting. It was the kind of war we cannot fight. We could have gone all out and obviously destroyed Hanoi, but we had to worry about the Russians and the Chinese.

This is a real problem. It is guerrilla-type war, and when we fight, we have to use overwhelming force. When we use overwhelming force, you make enemies, and when you make enemies, you lose the hearts and minds.

I am saying the same thing you are. We want to win some kind of, I do not say victory. We want to win stability in the Middle East. That is the key because it is important to the free world. That is what is so important.

So we all are saying the same thing. One of the top generals said to me, that part cannot be won militarily all the time they will say. General Pace said it cannot be won militarily. So how do we do it? Diplomatically, politically and when the Iraqis say we are going to give amnesty to people that kill Americans, I mean, they fired the guy, okay, but that is a signal to them. We have 47 percent of the Iraqis say that they want to kill Americans. They think that is patriotic for them to kill Americans. That is disturbing to me.

The reason I started speaking out, one of the reasons, I remember I was in the hospital. One young woman said to me, with her husband lying there on the bed, wounded after a second trip, she said, you know, he did not enlist, this woman said, to fight for the Iraqis. He enlisted to fight for America.

It has got to be in the national security interest of America.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN of California. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. DENT), a member of the Homeland Security Committee and the Government Reform Committee.

(Mr. DENT asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DENT. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this resolution.

Today, the global war on terror is being waged on two primary fronts, as we know: Afghanistan and Iraq.

In Afghanistan, a resurgent Taliban is attempting to undermine the efforts of the United States and our NATO allies. The threat from these murderous extremist terrorists remains real, and if one does not believe us, then I suggest reviewing the events of recent days in Canada, where the terrorists, motivated by Canada's participation in Afghanistan, unsuccessfully attempted to decapitate the Canadian government. Mr. Speaker, the United States and our NATO allies must remain resolute in Afghanistan.

In Iraq, which I visited last year, I believe it is important and imperative that this Congress must have a serious, sober discussion about the consequences of failure in Iraq and what that means for the future. Failure in Iraq means a more destabilized Middle East that will be manifested by increasing sectarian strife and a political vacuum that will be filled by murderers and anarchists who most assuredly are not committed to the rule of law.

What is worse, the war will continue, not only in a destabilized Middle East, but elsewhere and in places we would rather not fight. Our friends and allies will be at greatest risk and more exposed than is currently the case.

To be sure, mistakes have been made in Iraq, from pre-war intelligence to de-Ba'athification to the destructive events of Abu Ghraib, but these mistakes should not stop us from our goal:

the establishment of a stable, representative, national unity government that can manage the security situation much better itself and that lives in peace with its neighbors.

Mr. Speaker, I, too, would like to submit additional remarks for the RECORD detailing the efforts of the House Homeland Security Committee's contributions in fighting this global war on terror.

The Global War on Terror is, by virtue of its title, a war with world-wide scope. As a member of the Homeland Security Committee, I am particularly concerned about the way in which this war can impact our way of life here, in these United States. And I believe that we have been doing a fine job of trying to make sure that terrorists or agents of foreign powers Do Not harm us on our shores.

Since September 11, the Homeland Security Committee has enacted or sponsored legislation designed to insure the safety of the people living in this country. In H.R. 1544, the Faster and Smarter First Responders Act, we tried to make sure that homeland security grant dollars are spent according to risk, and not with regard to political concerns. In H.R. 1817, the Homeland Security Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2006, we authorized the recruitment and training of 2,000 new border patrol agents to insure that terrorists are not able to penetrate our land borders.

As part of the Global War on Terror we have likewise worked hard to make sure that goods moving into this country are secure. In H.R. 4954, the SAFE Port Act of 2006, the Committee authorizes \$821 million annually for port security programs. This bill further requires the Department of Homeland Security, DHS, to deploy nuclear and radiological detection systems at 22 U.S. seaports by the end of FY07, an action that will cover 98 percent of incoming maritime containers. Further, it makes sure that the people working at our port facilities are properly cleared and identified by forcing DHS to set deadlines for the implementation of the Transportation Worker Information Credential, TWIC, program, a biometrically-enhanced identification card system designed to make sure that those who would seek to commit acts of terrorism against us are Not allowed to work within the U.S. port system.

We have also worked hard to make sure that our transportation modalities are also protected in this Global War on Terror. In H.R. 5441, the Homeland Security Appropriations bill, which the House passed on May 25, 2006, we appropriated \$2.05 billion for Coast Guard port and waterway security operations, \$2.6 billion to screen airline passenger baggage, \$13.2 million for rail security inspectors and explosive detection canines, and \$458 million for biological, chemical, and explosives countermeasures to protect the Nation's critical infrastructure.

Of course, in addition to securing our transportation modalities, we have also taken steps to make sure that terrorists in the Global War on Terror are not able to access what they clearly would most like to get their hands on—nuclear materials. The SAFE Port Act codifies in law the establishment of the Domestic Nuclear Detection Office, DNDO. Earlier this year I had the opportunity to visit the DNDO facility in Nevada, and I am firmly convinced of the importance of maintaining the vitality of this or-

ganization. The DNDO has one of the most important missions within the DHS—the detection and identification of nuclear materials. During my visit, I observed first-hand the testing of nuclear and radiological countermeasures, including detection devices designed to identify vehicles transporting nuclear explosive devices, fissile material, and radiological material intended for illicit use. The SAFE Port Act further requires the DNDO to conduct testing of next-generation nuclear and radiological detection equipment and to put forth a timeline for completing installation of such equipment at all U.S. seaports.

Members of the Homeland Security Committee have worked hard to insure the safety of Americans, our commerce, and our infrastructure. Since September 11, we have not had a major terrorist incident in this country. And I believe that it is appropriate to attribute this positive development at least in part to the efforts of the leadership of this Committee, which is determined to make sure that the homeland is indeed a safe place.

Mr. MURTHA. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

□ 0945

Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN of California. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased now to yield time to the distinguished gentlewoman from Ohio (Mrs. SCHMIDT), who sits on the Government Reform Committee, 2 minutes.

Mrs. SCHMIDT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the new freedoms women have recently discovered in the Middle East, freedoms that the hard-working heroes in uniform have given them, freedoms they now not only cherish but themselves will fight for.

There are 50 million new lovers of freedom in Iraq and Afghanistan. Their liberation from oppression should compel every freedom-loving citizen on Earth to rejoice. I too am so proud of the freedom we as a Nation have brought to the oppressed.

However, some were more oppressed than others. Women had no voice, no opportunity, no hope, no dreams. All of that is changing, changing because we have championed the cause of freedom. Millions of young girls this very day are getting something they dared not dream about a few short years ago: an education. Today, women are voting. They are also serving as legislators in town councils and places where, before our commitment to liberation, they dared not even look a man in the face. They have been liberated. We are their liberators. We can and should be proud.

Yes, more needs to be done, but in lands where women were treated worse than cattle, a revolution is occurring, a revolution of respect, a liberation of lives. Our actions have made the lives of millions of women not just better on the margins but have actually giving them hope, endowed them with freedom, and dared them to dream.

We have much to be proud of. I am proud of our men and women in uniform who stand in harm's way. I am proud that this great country stands for good and opposes evil. I am proud that this Congress and this President

understand that freedom is God's gift to all mankind and that evil tolerated is evil assisted.

Mr. MURTHA. I yield 1 minute to the distinguished Democratic leader, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. PELOSI), who, on her first trip overseas went with me to Iraq to talk to the troops and tell them how much she supported the troops.

Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Speaker, at the opening of the debate, Mr. SKELTON asked the House to observe a moment of silence for the 2,500 troops that we have lost in the war in Iraq. The number is a staggering one, but we warned them one person at a time. I hope their families live with great pride. I know they will live with great sorrow.

My uncle was killed at the Battle of the Bulge, and for my father's entire life it was as if it had happened yesterday. As if it had happened yesterday. We know that experience has been repeated over and over again across our country.

In remembering those who died, and their families who mourn them, let us also salute all of our men and women in uniform who are doing their jobs with great courage, with great patriotism and dedication, and their families who are making enormous sacrifices; 2,500 killed, 18,000 wounded, more than half of them permanently, straining our military readiness and eroding our reputation in the world.

The President of the United States says, stay the course. Stay the course? I don't think so, Mr. President. It is time to face the facts.

On every important aspect in the Iraq war, President Bush and his advisors have been wrong: wrong on the reason to go to war, wrong on the reception our troops would receive, wrong on the rapidity with which the Iraqi economy would be able to pay for the war and reconstruction, and wrong on the willingness of the international community to join in efforts to stabilize Iraq.

But don't take my word for it. This gross incompetence has driven some of our fighting generals to level devastating public criticism. MG John Battiste, who led the 1st Infantry Division in Iraq, has said: "My own decision to speak out goes back to watching firsthand the arrogant and contemptuous attitude of Rumsfeld as he ignored the advice of military experts during preparations for war, and then living with the impact of those strategic blunders as a division commander in Iraq. Secretary Rumsfeld and his team turned what should have been a deliberate victory in Iraq into a prolonged challenge."

That is why over 2 years ago I asked for the resignation of Secretary Rumsfeld, and I do so again today. No one has been held accountable for all of these mistakes in Iraq.

The incompetence comes at a great cost. The Bush administration is so obsessed with the effort to paint an optimistic picture of the situation in Iraq

that it refuses to face the facts. The facts are these: more than 2,500 American troops have been killed. Again, more than 18,000 have been injured, half of them permanently. And as the war costs have grown to over \$400 billion, key construction projects remain unfinished.

As defense and intelligence expert Anthony Cordesman recently wrote: "The U.S. aid process has failed. It has wasted at least half of the \$22 billion in U.S. funds and much of the \$34.6 billion in Iraq funds it attempted to use to secure and develop Iraq's economy."

I repeat: defense and intelligence expert Anthony Cordesman recently wrote: "The U.S. aid process has failed. It has wasted at least half of the \$22 billion in U.S. funds and much of the \$34.6 billion in Iraq funds in an attempt to secure and develop Iraq's economy."

This is outrageous. Where is the accountability?

In fact, Mr. Cordesman concludes that the U.S.-managed Iraq reconstruction efforts have been as failed as the U.S. response to Hurricane Katrina.

The Bush Iraq policy has diverted resources and attention from what should be the focus of our effort against terrorism in places like Afghanistan. The lack of stability and the deteriorating security situation in Afghanistan is a casualty of the war in Iraq. The war has not made our country safer. It has not made our military stronger. It has caused great damage to our reputation in the world, and it has hindered the fight against terrorism.

In face of all of this incompetence and the cost of the war, I repeat, the President urges us to "stay the course." Stay the course, Mr. President, is not a strategy. It is a slogan.

I will vote against this resolution because it is an affirmation of the President's failed policy in Iraq, and in doing so I will be pleased to join Mr. MURTHA and Mr. SKELTON. And I would like to at this moment salute them for their patriotism and their dedication to our country. They are second to none, as Mr. SKELTON said in his remarks. They are second to none in this Congress and in this country in looking out for the troops and being concerned and knowledgeable about troop readiness, about the strains on our military this war is putting on them and in deterring our ability to respond to other threats.

I salute them for their leadership and, in fact, their courage. Because here we have the Republicans putting on the floor a vacuous resolution, a challenge that if you say that you support the troops, you have to vote for this. That day is over. That day is over. The credentials on real security for our country, be it homeland security, be it willing to project military might to protect America's interests at home and abroad, we all share a that. So don't put something on the table that says you either vote for this if you support the troops or you don't.

This resolution is one thing and one thing only: it is an affirmation of

President Bush's failed Iraq policy. The American people know the policy has failed. The American people know that. Hopefully, it will dawn on the President, and he, instead of stay the course, will change the course. He will stop digging the hole he is digging in Iraq and come out and see the light of day as to what is the right direction.

Across the country, Americans have had free and open debate about this war. But when the time came to debate Iraq in this Congress, Republicans shut down debate with a closed rule. This is not only an affront to the Democrats; it is an affront to the American people. Closed rule. Limited debate. Twice as many people on our side of the aisle would like to have spoken, but there wasn't enough time. There wasn't enough time to give Members of Congress the opportunity to give voice to the concerns of their constituents about a matter as important as sending and keeping our troops at war.

What a sad commentary on our democracy. We supposedly are going to Iraq to promote democracy, yet we don't even have it on the floor of the House of Representatives. What is sad about that is that we owe so much better, so much more to the American people, particularly to the brave men and women we have sent to fight in Iraq.

Democrats are calling for a new direction in Iraq. Our new direction would say to the Iraqi people that we will not be in your country indefinitely, we will not construct permanent bases, and we will not control the flow of your oil. We will work with you and your neighbors diplomatically to ensure that the reconstruction of Iraq is successful. We will do as Mr. MURTHA advocates. We will redeploy and be ready.

Republicans in Congress continue to try to mislead the American people by suggesting a link between the war in Iraq and the war on terror. They are distinct, as Mr. SKELTON has repeatedly and eloquently stated. They are distinct. And efforts to portray one as part of the other are a disservice to the truth and to the men and women sent to fight in Baghdad, Kirkuk, and Ramadi. The huge cost of the Iraq war in lost lives, life-altering wounds sustained, and billions of dollars spent demand better of us.

The defense authorization bill, as was quoted again by Mr. SKELTON, enacted last year, declares 2006 to be a year of significant transition to full Iraqi sovereignty, creating the conditions of the phased redeployment of United States forces from Iraq. That is in the 2006 DOD authorization bill: the phased redeployment of United States forces from Iraq. That is the law of the land. You all voted to support it.

We are halfway through 2006, significant transition has not occurred, and the only redeployment has been of U.S. forces into Iraq, not out. The war in Iraq has been a mistake. I say a grotesque mistake. It must be our resolve

to end the war as soon as possible and to resolve to not make similar mistakes in the future. We owe it to the American people. We owe it to the young men and women that we send in to fight the fight.

Again, Democrats take our responsibility to provide for the common defense very seriously. We are proud to have leaders like Mr. MURTHA and Mr. SKELTON to lead that charge for us.

Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN of California. Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to yield a real 3 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Virginia (Mr. TOM DAVIS), the chairman of the Government Reform Committee.

(Mr. TOM DAVIS of Virginia asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. TOM DAVIS of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the resolution before us today. I would like to first offer my gratitude to those brave men and women who are fighting or have fought in Iraq and Afghanistan. We owe you a debt which we can never repay.

Since the United States invaded Iraq, I have seen this as a high-stakes gambit. If we were successful in not only defeating the Iraqi Army, but in the more difficult task of establishing a democratic government, we would be far down the road to affecting a paradigm shift in the Middle East, one which would replace potentates, dictators, and repression with representative governments, transparency, and opportunities for both men and women.

If we were to fail, the cost would be incalculable. It would be a reaffirmation for many in the world that the United States lacked the fortitude to see a mission through to its completion. It would embolden terrorists the world over; threaten those states in the Middle East, such as Jordan and Israel, that are friends of the United States.

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Regardless, the situation in Iraq is what it is. There is no question Iraq is a petri dish for terrorists now. Our main nemesis in Iraq is called "al Qaeda in Iraq." Thus, our activities in both Iraq and Afghanistan are now clearly linked to a global war on terror. There is no other way to view the situation.

I am eager to build on the recent successes in Iraq. I truly hope that we have turned a corner with the death of Zarqawi and the forming of the government. If voter turnout is any indication, the Iraqi people are eager for democracy. They had a higher voter turnout in Iraq than we did in Virginia for our gubernatorial race. But make no mistake, what we are trying to do in Iraq has been and will continue to be extraordinarily difficult. Even with Zarqawi gone, there are many dangerous people who will stop at nothing to stop us.

I don't support a public date of certain withdrawal from Iraq. Doing so creates an untenable situation for our

forces and our Iraqi allies and presents a real gift of predictability to the enemy. But there has to be a sense of urgency. We are in a war that we have to win, but we cannot plod along indefinitely.

Our Founding Fathers had 13 years between the beginning of the American Revolution, the ratification of the Constitution, and the inauguration of George Washington. We don't have that luxury in Iraq. Our troops are giving their lives in Iraq. Our country is spending hundreds of billions of dollars. We can't pull the rug out from the under the Iraqis, but we can't babysit the situation either. We don't have time to waste on activities that are ineffective. We don't have money to waste on bad equipment and services.

Some have charged that this Congress has been asleep at the wheel and has done no oversight. That's not true. I have. Our committee has held four hearings on contracting practices in Iraq, including a day for whistleblowers at Halliburton, and I intend to hold more.

Our subcommittees, particularly the one chaired by Mr. SHAYS, have held dozens of others. What we have found is a lot of mistakes in management and oversight. But remember, this is the first time we have contracted this extensively in a combat situation. Everything about doing business, everything in a war zone is difficult and costly, and it is disingenuous to deny this.

If we are going to see this mission through successfully, there must continue to be vigorous, comprehensive, constant oversight to ensure we stay on the right path. We should do everything we can to hasten the day when Iraq is able to handle its own affairs. Our role in Congress is to conduct the oversight that the people expect of us.

Mr. MURTHA. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. FATTAH) for a unanimous consent request.

(Mr. FATTAH asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. FATTAH. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to this resolution.

Mr. Speaker, I rise again today in opposition to the war in Iraq, a position I have consistently held since the President first undertook this misguided policy at the expense of our nation's men and women in uniform and our domestic priorities. While I found myself in a relative minority at the time I first voted in opposition, I find myself now situated amongst a majority of the American people in addition to some of the most knowledgeable and committed patriots this country has ever known.

I am today opposed to H. Res. 861 and remain committed to a better course, one that is in the interest of American foreign policy, America's fighting men and women, America's future security and American victory. The Resolution, which has been discussed, is flawed, not only in substance, but in process. The decision to enter into and remain involved in foreign conflict is one of the most serious responsibilities the Framers of the Constitution granted to the Congress at the drafting in

Philadelphia. The Republican leaders in this Congress have shirked their oversight responsibilities and have denied a democratic process even in the debate over a nonbinding resolution.

Throughout this conflict we have heard of shortages of supplies from armor to protect the lives of our soldiers to reliable intelligence to guide their mission. Surely the most devastating shortage has been the lack of leadership in this conflict. The President has failed, since the beginning, to chart a course for victory, to correct mistakes as they have arisen and to secure that the ideals for which the American forces are fighting are never compromised.

I rise in honor of the sacrifice that far too many men and women have been called to make and in the hope that this conflict will find a new direction, one which will support American victory, security and justice. I look forward to working with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to chart a better course and plan a better future for the people of America and the people of Iraq.

Mr. MURTHA. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. KILDEE) for the purpose of a unanimous consent request.

(Mr. KILDEE asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to the resolution.

Mr. Speaker, let us be very clear on the points we can agree.

Every Member of this House was horrified by the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001.

Every Member of this House believes we must do what is necessary to defend our country and our people from future attacks and to eliminate the threat of terrorism.

And every Member of this House supports our troops and their families, and we commend them for their honorable service under very difficult and stressful circumstances.

But today, Mr. Speaker, this House debates the ongoing war in Iraq, not the struggle against terrorism.

I voted no when the House considered the Congressional Resolution authorizing the President to invade Iraq.

At that time, I had several crucial questions that needed clear answers:

1. What is the nature and the urgency of the Iraqi threat to the United States?
2. What is the mission of our troops?
3. How much international support will we have?
4. Will this military operation in Iraq increase terrorism or decrease terrorism?
5. What is the exit strategy to withdraw our troops from Iraq?

Despite my questions on the rationale for the war, I have consistently supported the funding for our troops.

They deserve our full support, and they deserve to have everything necessary for their mission.

And as the father of two sons who have served in the military, I would want no less.

Mr. Speaker, we now know that Saddam Hussein did not have weapons of mass destruction.

President Bush has publicly acknowledged that there was no link or connection between Saddam Hussein and the terrorist attacks on 9/11.

The mission of our troops seems to change and expand daily.

As for international support, the American taxpayer has foot the vast majority of the costs to the tune of hundreds of billions of dollars.

And American fighting men and women, and their families, have borne the vast majority of the deaths and injuries to coalition troops, over 2,500 killed and 18,000 wounded.

Moreover, many of the original members of our coalition have withdrawn or are withdrawing their troops from Iraq, leaving the U.S. to shoulder the burden almost alone.

Are we safer today than we were before the invasion of Iraq?

According to U.S. State Department data, there were 175 international terrorist attacks in 2003, and that was a 20-year high.

In 2004, the number jumped three-fold to 650 attacks.

In 2005, 11,111 terror attacks were reported by the state department.

Finally, the Bush Administration does not now nor ever has had a viable exit strategy for our troops in Iraq.

Saying, "we will stand down as the Iraqis stand up" puts the fate and future of American troops completely at the mercy of the competence of the Iraqi government and its security forces.

I agree with the resolution before us, we should not set an "arbitrary" date for withdrawal of U.S. troops from Iraq.

But we should set intelligent, well-thought out benchmarks that make the most sense for American national interests.

Setting reasonable benchmarks for the departure of our troops would send several important messages.

To the Iraqi national government—get your house in order now!

To the Iraqi Sunnis opposing our occupation now is the time to cut your best deal with the Shiite and Kurdish factions while the U.S. is still able to act as an honest broker.

To our American military leaders—here is a date to which you can plan, knowing when the rebuilding of our military capabilities can begin.

To the American people we have done what we could.

From this point on, it is now up to the Iraqi people to find their way, with the support of the international community.

And finally, to the terrorists the Iraqi people will deal with you now if you remain in Iraq.

For all the other terrorists outside of Iraq, the United States can now shift the full force of its military, diplomatic, law enforcement, and economic resources to the single task of hunting you down and bringing you to justice.

Mr. MURTHA. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. OLVER) for the purpose of a unanimous consent request.

(Mr. OLVER asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. OLVER. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to the resolution before us.

Mr. Speaker, H. Res. 861 is a whitewash justification of every erroneous action of the Bush-Cheney administration in their war of choice on Iraq.

It's no surprise that Bush, CHENEY and Rumsfeld seek this late coating of whitewash that this resolution attempts to provide. The

war on Iraq was unjustified, has been egregiously mismanaged, and has made all Americans less safe.

Americans were told repeatedly by President Bush and Vice President CHENEY that Iraq had weapons of mass destruction. None were ever found.

President Bush and Vice President CHENEY repeatedly implied that Iraq was involved in the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon on September 11, 2001. The preponderance of intelligence before the attack on Iraq contradicted that and no such evidence has been found.

The conduct of President Bush's war of choice has been plagued with incompetent civilian leadership decisions that have cost many lives and rendered the war on and occupation of Iraq a strategic policy disaster for the United States. The incompetence and corruption involved in the reconstruction have rendered that expensive effort largely ineffective.

The most critical, much-cited incompetent decision on the part of the Bush administration was to commit far too small a force for the huge, dangerous and multifaceted tasks at hand. Because of that egregious blunder in judgment and planning by the Bush administration, our severely overextended troops took many more casualties than necessary, and they could not:

Stop the looting of the treasures of Iraq's ancient culture and the public institutions of present day Iraq—its schools, universities and hospitals;

Seize control of Saddam's huge conventional weapons depots which have been used to kill our service men and women throughout the insurgency;

Control the borders against the influx into Iraq of senior terrorists from Bin Laden's international network who wanted to be part of killing Americans;

Provide the Iraqi civilian population security from the Sunni-Baathist insurgency as it grew in strength; and

Hold the ground fought over with insurgents in search and destroy missions which left whole cities in ruins and whatever remained of the civilian population a fertile recruiting ground for more insurgents.

The incompetence regarding body and vehicle armor rises almost to a level of criminal negligence.

The military's own report says that one-third of deaths and casualties could have been avoided if proper body armor and vehicle armor had been provided from the start of the war. Our soldiers' civilian leaders did not follow a first maxim of war: protect your troops. American service men and women deserved better, and the civilian leaders who failed them should be held accountable.

But instead of honoring our soldiers now with an honest debate about the war, its conduct and its prospects, we are presented today with a thick coating of whitewash. This resolution is dishonest on its very face.

Even though there was no connection between Afghanistan and Iraq, H. Res. 861 seeks desperately to make that false connection. It seeks to transform the bad decision to wage war on Iraq as a valid component of the global war on terror. It seeks to cast the missteps and incompetence in Iraq as progress in the global war on terror. Even though there was never any philosophical or operational connection between Saddam Hus-

sein and Al Qaeda, the President and his Republican allies in Congress seek by this resolution to re-write history and re-cast the war on Iraq as having positive implications in the war on terrorism.

Exactly the opposite is true.

After 9/11, in part because so many nations lost citizens in the World Trade Center, America enjoyed virtually total global support and willingness to collaboratively destroy the Bin Laden Al Qaeda network. The opportunity was there to work carefully with the entire world, including almost all Muslim nations, to make Americans and the whole world safer by isolating and shutting down Al Qaeda.

Did we complete that mission? No; Bin Laden is still at large and the conditions in Afghanistan are deteriorating. Instead, President Bush started a second war unrelated to 9/11 and the hunt for Bin Laden's networks and his followers.

We've now spent well over \$350 billion on an effort that has not achieved its own goals and, due to its astronomical cost and resource drain, has severely undercut our ability to pursue and destroy Bin Laden's international terrorist network with its many cells that existed in 2002, continue to exist today and certainly will exist into the future.

Twenty-five hundred fine young American men and women have lost their lives, 95 percent of whom have been killed since President Bush declared "Mission Accomplished" more than 3 years ago.

America has also forever lost the service of thousands of good soldiers who are now disabled as a result of battle wounds in Iraq. Many others will need mental and emotional rehabilitation before they can return to normal life. The multiple re-deployments of Guard and Reserve troops have severely undercut the retention and recruitment prospects for the fighting force we depend upon to protect us.

President Bush and his administration have defended torture and rendition and ignored the Geneva Conventions. America has lost the moral high ground with the rest of the world, and we have fewer allies as a result. President Bush and his administration have undermined the war on terror by using tactics outlawed by international treaty and condemned by even our closest friends.

And, finally, President Bush's war on Iraq has provided Al Qaeda a training and recruitment ground that it could not have hoped for in its wildest dreams, as well as a golden opportunity to target Americans right in the unprotected center of the Middle East. President Bush's war on Iraq is viewed broadly in Islamic communities as an attack on Islam, and thus the President has alienated a large part of one fifth of the world's population. The most extreme individuals and factions in Islamic countries are now more motivated than ever to kill Americans, and the number of potential terrorists has greatly expanded.

So a truthful assessment of how America is doing in the war on terror as a result of President Bush's war on Iraq is that we have been set back by decades. Bad decisions and incompetence have achieved a vast determination in countless desperate, impoverished, disaffected and oppressed young Muslim men and women to take out their anger and express their fundamentalism and radicalism by attacking Americans and American interests. We are far less safe as a nation and will remain so throughout our lifetimes and our children's lifetimes.

Clearly, a stable, unified and democratic Iraq cannot be achieved militarily by the U.S. Our servicemen and women have done the best job that can be done in the situation into which their civilian leaders have placed them, and they deserve the highest level of gratitude from all Americans. They have already taken too many casualties—too many dead, too many wounded—because they were too few and too poorly provided with the armor they needed to succeed safely.

If a unified and stable Iraq is to emerge out of the ethnic and sectarian violence that is so perilously close to civil war, the Iraqi people and their government must make the political compromises necessary to secure a successful democracy. They must find in themselves a new nation. We cannot do that for them; we can only give them the opportunity to do it.

Nor should we accept the President's mantra, "When the Iraqis stand up, we will stand down." A nice slogan, but that is simply a recipe for an unlimited occupation.

We need to make it clear that we will withdraw from Iraq within 6 to 9 months—so that the Iraqis will know that they must stand up and defend the opportunity given to them.

We should immediately state that we will seek no permanent military bases in Iraq. In the remaining months, we should focus on achieving more robust international involvement in training of Iraqi soldiers, police officers, judges, teachers, and doctors—all key elements needed to end the sectarian and civil conflict and build Iraq's future. And we should prepare for the safe and orderly withdrawal of our troops.

The Bush administration has made many grievous and costly errors in Iraq over the past 3½ years and made little, if any, progress in the war on terrorism thereby. It is time to bring our young people home.

Mr. MURTHA. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume to make a couple of the comments, and then I will reserve my time.

The gentleman just before I spoke talked about how long it took America to get its independence. Actually, it is more than just 6 or 7 years, it went on through the Civil War, but they were all Americans. It was not an occupying force that was trying to force democracy on the United States. Can you imagine what we would have done if we had an occupying force here trying to force democracy on the United States? It would not have worked. But of course they were not democracies in most cases anyway.

So I just want to point out that in Iraq we have become the occupiers, and 47 percent of the people in Iraq, and this is a poll only 3 months old, says it is okay to kill Americans. One of the officials in the Iraqi government offered amnesty.

Since I spoke out on November 17, things have gotten worse. We have 130,000 troops in Iraq. Every day it gets worse. From May to May, it gets worse and worse. It is not a matter of stay the course. It is a matter of change direction.

I said a little earlier, Ronald Reagan understood when it was time to change direction. He did one of the biggest tax cuts in history. He turned around a lit-

tle bit later and adjusted that. This didn't call it a tax increase, it was an adjustment.

In Beirut he decided we have to make a change, it won't work. In Somalia, President Clinton did the same thing. And over that mistake, and it was a substantial mistake, the Secretary of Defense resigned because he had lost the confidence of the military in the way he handled the situation in Somalia. We changed direction there. We went in the wrong direction. We went after a tribal leader named Aideed.

In Iraq, unfortunately, the way we operate as a military, and there is no one who understands better than the gentleman with the 173rd in California, understands what the military does when it goes into a place. You have to use overwhelming force. I promote that. I am in favor of that. I do everything I can to make sure that the military has what they need to prevail and protect American lives.

But when you do that, you inadvertently kill people and you make enemies. Abu Ghraib was another example of the enemies that we made, and the public relations battle has been lost worldwide. People have discredited the United States and have little confidence in our ability.

Somebody brought up Spain yesterday. They said ask Spain about terrorism. Well, 56 percent of the people in Spain think the United States is more of a threat in Iraq than Iran is in the world. So we have got a lot of things we can talk about as rhetoric. The facts are the situation is not getting better. We have 130,000 troops on the ground and only Iraqis can handle this.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from New York (Mr. SWEENEY) for a unanimous consent request.

(Mr. SWEENEY asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SWEENEY. I thank the gentleman.

Mr. Speaker, after 9/11, our nation united against terrorism and those who want to kill innocent civilians and destroy our American way of life. New York was impacted deeply by these tragic events and we understand firsthand the kind of unthinkable damage that can be inflicted by hate-filled violent extremists.

I voted to support the use of force in Iraq for many reasons. Decades of deception and violation of United Nations resolutions; invading neighboring countries; and a litany of ruthless atrocities by Saddam Hussein involving murdering his own people.

I believe that the best way to safeguard freedom in our nation increasingly depends on supporting a democratic global strategy in areas beyond our borders. That is why supporting the creation of a self-governing Iraq is so critical to the future of both our countries.

Having said that, I am deeply disappointed in this resolution because I believe we owe Americans more than a simple declaration of our resolve in Iraq. We owe them an account of our progress in the Global War on Terror;

an assessment of the situation, the stakes, and the strategy for victory in the battle for Iraq; and an affirmation we will defend our country, defeat the enemy, and win this unsought struggle for survival.

There are several points in this resolution that I am concerned about. It also strikes me as merely a reiteration of the resolution we passed last December.

First, I am disappointed in the choice of the word adversary in this resolution. History and reality illustrate that within Iraq and the broader Global War on Terror we do not face an adversary—we face a very real and dangerous enemy. We should not be afraid to clearly state what we as a nation are up against.

Secondly, philosophically, any state-sponsor of terror is a threat to the United States, because terrorism is an attack upon the self-evident, inalienable human rights to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. This point should be clearly expressed in a resolution of this nature.

Additionally, the second clause states “. . . for the past two decades, terrorists have used violence in a futile attempt to intimidate the United States.” This clause is too sanitized. The hard truth is the enemy has not tried to intimidate us. The enemy has tried to kill us and often succeeded. The enemy does so because our very existence as sovereign citizens of a free Republic constitutes a beacon of hope for all who are—and all who yearn to be—free; thus, we are our enemy's paramount obstacle to world dominion.

I know first hand the difficulties we face in Iraq. I have heard it directly from the men and women that are fighting so hard in Afghanistan and Iraq.

I do hope that despite my concerns that this debate provides a clearer understanding of the threats we really face and the opportunity to develop a strategy that protects our troops and enables our military to develop a comprehensive strategy to win this war, transfer the power to the Iraqi people and bring them home. It should also demonstrate that the “cut and run” agenda of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle is the wrong approach to this problem and encourages the terrorists to wait us out and undo all that our soldiers have worked through blood, sweat, tears and their lives to establish—a victory for our nation and a stable and secure democracy in the Middle East.

Lastly, and most importantly, I will continue to stand by and support U.S. troops. I must take this opportunity to pay a personal tribute to the brave lives that have been claimed from my district: Nathan Brown, Stephen Madison, Kevin Kimberly, Isaac Nieves, and Joseph Robsky. Their sacrifice, and the sacrifice of their families and loved ones embody the spirit of our great nation and principles of democracy we hold dear.

Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN of California. I yield to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. GILLMOR) for a unanimous consent.

(Mr. GILLMOR asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GILLMOR. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the resolution.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to offer my support for the efforts of our brave men and women in uniform fighting to protect our Nation in the global war on terror. Today, some people are

trying to make this debate about politics or another opportunity to convince some of our national media that our efforts in Iraq have not been successful, these people are wrong in their facts and their intent.

I recently led a delegation of members to Vietnam, India, Singapore and Thailand. After meeting with three prime ministers and their parliamentary leaders, I am ever more convinced of the need to stay the course in Iraq and Afghanistan. One common theme came from each of my meetings—the United States must win. It is a simple theme and a powerful one. We cannot leave Iraq before the job is done. If the terrorists who have invaded Iraq can prove to the world that they are able to overcome the will of the American people and force our early withdrawal, they can do that to any nation.

Mr. Speaker, we are the world's last remaining superpower. We are the leader of democracy and the pinnacle of freedom. If bands of murderous terrorists in Iraq and Afghanistan can convince this body to abandon our mission, they will have won. And they will not stop at simply expelling America from Iraq. They will work to destroy the western world, our values and our freedoms.

Our mission in Iraq has changed. Our forces easily defeated and captured Saddam Hussein and his henchmen. Now, our mission is to finish the job by building up Iraqi security forces and the Iraqi Government so that they can defend and govern themselves. I believe President Bush when he says, "as Iraqis stand up, we will stand down."

Today the Iraqi forces have gained great strength. There are now more than twice as many members of the Iraqi Security Forces as there are U.S. forces serving in Iraq. Iraqi forces are now a part of more than 90 percent of all operations in Iraq. With the complete formation of the presidential cabinet, three free elections and the elimination of al-Qa'ida leaders in Iraq, the global war on terror is indeed progressing and advancing freedom and democracy across the world.

Mr. Speaker, our debate today is a useful one. It is an opportunity to say to the world that we stand behind our troops 100 percent. This debate shows that we support the mission of our American patriots. Today, the United States Congress should pass this resolution and demonstrate to the world, once again, our commitment to freedom and democracy.

Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from California (Mr. RADANOVICH) for a unanimous consent request.

(Mr. RADANOVICH asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. RADANOVICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the resolution.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for this opportunity to discuss the Global War on Terror in Iraq and Afghanistan. With the events of the past few weeks, including the completion of a democratically elected government and the elimination of al-Qaeda terrorist Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, we have seen the development of democracies and another strong blow against terrorism. The importance of staying the course in Iraq and standing strong is evident with every success.

Steadfast determination in Iraq is key to the security of the United States and the global

community. I strongly support the United States' continued military involvement in the Global War on Terror. The importance of keeping our country safe by standing up for democracy and freedom is our number one priority.

I had the opportunity to visit with our troops in Iraq and felt so proud. Their determination to bring peace and hope to the Middle East and end the terrorist threat to the U.S. was humbling and inspiring. Nothing demonstrates our military families' commitment more than the family of Corporal Michael Anderson Jr. who lost his life in Iraq. They came to Washington, from Modesto, California, recently to honor his life. It was a privilege to meet such an inspiring family, who, in the face of tragedy, demonstrated unwavering patriotism.

Our courageous soldiers, who are fighting for freedom and our way of life, deserve the full support of the American people. We owe it to those who have given their lives, to stay and complete this mission.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support the resolution declaring the United States will prevail in the Global War on Terror.

Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. KINGSTON) for a unanimous consent request.

(Mr. KINGSTON asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the resolution.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of House Resolution 861, declaring that the United States will prevail in the Global War on Terror.

We have made great strides in the War on Terror. The men and women of our Armed Forces along with coalition partners deserve our continued support. They have displayed nothing short of true dedication and continued professionalism in carrying out their mission.

It is with high esteem that I rise to say we are winning the Global War on Terrorism. This is highlighted by the capture of Osama bin Laden's Prince of Iraq, al-Zarqawi. This is truly a milestone and has resulted in hundreds of raids which continue to provide an enormous amount of new intelligence to our commanders in the field. As political polls show, a majority of Iraqis wants the violence to end, and that Sunnis, Shiites, and other tribes were coming together to help make that happen. As an example of progress on the ground, he said that the number of intelligence "tips" had increased from 400 per month to 4,000 which makes the capture of terrorists like al-Zarqawi possible.

The newly elected prime minister, Nuri al-Maliki, the first constitutional prime minister of Iraq since the revolutionaries toppled the Iraqi monarchy and murdered the royal family in 1958, has been successful in establishing a diverse government; one that has demonstrated a willingness to work together. This cooperation has transcended to the general population. A new Iraqi society, one that seeks to live in harmony with each other and believe the government can improve the situation in Iraq, is a society that is much safer because the Iraqi Security Forces now conducted over 32,000 patrols during the month of April.

There are 263,400 forces assigned to the Ministry of Defense and they are capable of conducting over 86 percent of the planned op-

erations. It is projected by the end of this year, the Iraqi Security Forces will have responsibility and capability to fulfill a 100 percent of such operations.

Mr. Speaker, our goal of defeating terrorists, establishing a free and independent Iraq is obtainable if we continue to pursue our current course.

Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HENSARLING), who sits on the Budget Committee and the Financial Services Committee.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, I have listened to this debate very carefully for the last day. There are clearly those who want to debate whether we should have gone into Iraq. That point is moot.

There are some who want to debate immediate withdrawal regardless of the consequences. That is dangerous.

Some just want to criticize the administration yet offer no plan of their own. That is political posturing.

Finally, there are some who want to debate that victory is not only possible in Iraq, it is essential to our security. Count me among their numbers.

Like many Members of this body, I have been to Iraq to visit with our troops. Those whom I have spoken to, they believe we are winning. And they also believe it is essential, like one soldier told me, Congressman, I hate being here, but I know how important it is to my family and how important it is to my country that we succeed.

Mr. Speaker, I know that the American people are anxious, and I know that many days progress comes three steps forward and two steps backwards. And unfortunately, the national media tends to only portray the two steps backwards.

Mr. Speaker, Saddam Hussein has been captured. He has been defeated. Last week al Zarqawi, the number one terrorist in the region, has been eliminated. A quarter million of the Iraqi troops have been trained, equipped, and on patrol. After years of halting progress, we now have a fully functioning, democratically elected government in Iraq. This is important because we are not threatened by democracies. We are threatened by despotic regimes and terrorist ideologies.

But the news stories that are most important about why we are there are never written. I come from Dallas, Texas. I have never read the story that today no suicide bomber exploded in North Park Mall. I have never read the story that today no car bomb went off in Poteet High School, and I know I have never read the story that today JEB and Melissa HENSARLING put their 4-year old and 2-year old to bed in a safer, more secure Dallas, Texas, U.S.A.

Victory is costly. Defeat is even more costly.

Mr. MURTHA. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. MORAN).

Mr. MORAN of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Pennsylvania for standing up for the last 10

hours in defense of our country and the troops that serve us and, most importantly, throughout his entire life, and I thank him for demanding that the Iraqi people stand up for their own country and responding to the American people who are demanding that this Congress stand up for our Nation's interest. Staying the course in Iraq is not in our Nation's interest.

Several times the proponents of this resolution have cited Winston Churchill. Wonderful, lofty rhetoric, but there's a disconnect. Saddam Hussein did not drop any bombs on the United States. He was not involved in 9/11, didn't harbor any terrorists who were.

It has been argued if we redeployed it might hurt our credibility around the world. As has been said, our approval ratings around the world are the lowest they have ever been. People rank us down with Russia in terms of trust and respect.

It has been argued if we redeploy it might encourage terrorists. Our continued presence is the rallying cry in the recruitment tool for terrorists around the world. It has been argued that it might hurt American troops' morale. Mr. Speaker, 2,500 brave men and women dead, 18,000 seriously wounded and you want to stay the course?

It has been argued that there might be a civil war if we redeploy. There is a civil war today. The fact is the Iraqis are going to have to seize control of their own country. We have to redeploy. We won't leave the region, but we will be there to fight off foreign terrorists. But the Iraqis are going to have to determine their own future.

That's why this resolution is not in America's interest. Defeat this resolution. Changing the course, having a definable objective in Iraq is in America's interest.

Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN of California. Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to yield 1¼ minutes to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. MCHENRY).

(Mr. MCHENRY asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MCHENRY. Mr. Speaker, resolve, untested, is only an idea.

Today we are fighting a war against Islamic extremists. Make no mistake about it, this is a generational challenge. It was my grandparents' generation that fought the Nazis. It was my parents' generation that fought the communists. It is our generation that is fighting Islamic extremists wherever they are.

The left in this country have a policy that they are advocating here today, and they are advocating a policy called cut and run. They are advocating a policy of waving the white flag to our enemies. It is a policy, make no mistake about it, that the left in this country are advocating.

But we are fighting a war. We are fighting a war against Islamic extremists that hate the very fiber of our being as Americans. They hate our

freedoms and they hate the fact that we embrace equality here in this country, although imperfect. They hate the fact that we have religious freedom and freedom of speech in this country. Make no mistake about it, these are important things to Americans, and our enemy hates those important things.

We are having a great debate here, 10 hours of debate here in this Congress on this war policy, and I am proud that the majority in this House will stand to fight and win this war. It is not about status quo, it is about victory.

Mr. MURTHA. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, it is interesting to me, we stand here and fight in the air-conditioned Chambers of the United States Congress where these fellows are walking around in Iraq, men and women, with 70 pounds every day facing IEDs, never knowing when they may go off with tremendous stress. They are being deployed three and four times. It is easy to stay in an air-conditioned office and say I'm going to stay the course.

But let me tell you something, those troops, I hope they believe in what they are doing. That's what America is all about. But standing here and talking about policy and criticizing people just because they disagree with a policy is absolutely absurd. All of us support the troops and want them to come home as soon as they can.

What we need is a change in direction so we will be able to work this out. All of us want stability in the Middle East. That is what this whole thing is all about. We just disagree on how you do it. We disagree. Ever since the troops have been there, everything has gotten worse.

□ 1015

Electricity production is below pre-war levels; water only 1 hour a day in some parts. In Anbar Province no water. 90 percent unemployment. Not one project in Anbar Province. So it is not a matter of whether it is good or not. It is a matter only that the Iraqi's should solve this thing.

And when I hear somebody standing here sanctimoniously saying we are going to fight this out, we are not fighting at all. It is the troops that are doing the fighting, the families that are doing the sacrificing, a very small proportion of families in this country are doing the sacrificing. And that is why I get so upset when they stand here sanctimoniously saying we are fighting this thing. It is the troops that are doing the fighting, not the Members of Congress that are doing the fighting.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. GINGREY) for a unanimous consent request.

(Mr. GINGREY asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, I rise in full support of H. Res. 861.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of this resolution, H. Res. 861, and to emphatically declare that we will prevail in the War on Terror across the globe, and in Iraq.

We've already amassed a long list of accomplishments. Mr. Speaker, since being liberated from the oppressive Taliban regime, native Afghans have returned to their homeland in droves, many of whom are highly educated teachers, healthcare providers, and community leaders that were thrown out of the country by the Taliban.

The Afghan economy continues to power ahead and previously unheard-of opportunities are opening up, particularly for Afghani women.

Regrettably, these accomplishments don't seem to generate much enthusiasm with the mainstream media or our colleagues on the other side of the aisle. If you did nothing but listen to their negativity, you would not know that more than 3,600 schools in Iraq have been rehabilitated, or that 240 hospitals and 1,200 medical clinics have been reopened, nor that 13 power plants have been built, providing about 60 percent of Iraq's power generation, or that over 250,000 Iraqi security forces have been trained, equipped, and are fighting on the front line against the insurgency!

Further, Mr. Speaker, without our policies and efforts in carrying out the War on Terror, Libya would not have given up their WMD programs, free elections would not have taken place in Afghanistan and Iraq, a national unity government would not be in place in Iraq, and Abu Musab al-Zarqawi would still be carrying out terrorist operations.

Instead of heralding the unparalleled successes of our troops and our policies in prosecuting this war, my colleagues on the other side of the aisle would have the American people believe we are losing.

Perhaps Mr. Speaker, the hope of political gains has some of my colleagues seeking to exploit the few missteps we have incurred while ignoring a much greater number of victories.

Mr. Speaker, we cannot give in to the anti-war rhetoric, which only serves to embolden our enemies while offering little hope and little vision. It is always easier to pull back the reigns and watch from the sidelines, but we in America choose to be active in determining the course of history. Make no mistake, we are in a tough fight for the future of peace, freedom, and democracy in the Middle East and around the globe, but winning should be our only option.

As we debate this resolution today, let us not forget that nearly everyone of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle when presented with the same pre-war intelligence that President Bush had concluded with high confidence that Iraq was continuing its' WMD programs contrary to U.N. resolutions. For those who now want to claim the pre-war intelligence was in some way fabricated, both the bipartisan Senate Intelligence Committee in 2004 and bipartisan Robb-Silberman Committee in 2005 did not find any evidence to support that claim. It is shameful that "Monday Morning" critics who hate Secretary Rumsfeld and President Bush are now resorting to false claims about pre-war intelligence.

Given that Sadaam Hussein had used weapons of mass destruction on neighboring

countries in the past, along with his desire to bring us harm, Republicans and Democrats alike reached consensus that the potential for him to either harm us directly with these weapons, or indirectly by passing them on to terrorists, was too great a risk to take. The terrible human rights atrocities committed by Sadaam and his blatant disregard for repeated U.N. resolutions were further compelling grounds for our bi-partisan actions.

Mr. Speaker, none of these facts have changed. What has changed is the resolve of many on the other side of the aisle who in the process of changing their footing on the war, have become more interested in playing politics than in defeating terrorism and defending freedom. When these Members of Congress who are advocating a defeatist strategy, sometimes referred to as "cut and run", were presented with the opportunity in November 2005 to vote on withdrawing our forces from Iraq immediately, only 3 of those behind these calls stood by their words.

Mr. Speaker, Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki of Iraq made the following statements this past Friday: "We believe we will soon reach a tipping point in our battle against the terrorists as Iraqi security services increase in size and capacity, taking more and more responsibility away from the multinational forces. With our allies, we will also persevere to make Iraq a prosperous democracy in the heart of the Middle East."

Mr. Speaker, it is easy to see great hope and potential in the Iraqi government and the Iraqi people. However, ill conceived and short sighted strategies threaten any chance of Iraq becoming a bastion for democracy in the Middle East. I sincerely hope the defeatist rhetoric of the minority party will not dishearten the brave men and women who are defending and advancing freedom around the globe.

Therefore Mr. Speaker, I urge all members to support this resolution. Let our brave men and women in uniform know that we will never break faith with them. Let the Iraqi people know that their patriots have not died in vain.

Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 1½ minutes.

Mr. Speaker, I have the greatest respect for the gentleman from Pennsylvania. When I returned to this House after an absence of 16 years, he was one of the first people to greet me. I have enormous respect for the work we did together with others here 25 years ago in fighting common battles.

I have a general disagreement with him on this approach. I don't question your patriotism. I certainly am attempting not to be sanctimonious about this. But I think there are some real questions that we must pose. One of them would be this: I have heard it said from your side of the aisle that we are attempting to force democracy on this country, and it will never work.

Look at the three elections they had, the increasing participation. And, frankly, contrast that with what occurred just this last Tuesday in the Commonwealth of Virginia, where, for a primary to determine who the Democratic nominee is going to be for the Senate, 3 percent of the people showed up, 3 percent of the registered voters.

I would suggest if we were on this floor talking about Iraq where only 3

percent supported, people would say democracy is a failure. I am not willing to give up on the Commonwealth of Virginia. I hope we are not willing to give up on Iraq.

Secondly, the question about Vietnam. And I have the greatest respect for the gentleman; he served there with distinction, just as my father served in World War II with distinction. But I would suggest there are a number of differences between Vietnam and this experience. And one of the chief ones is this: when we left Vietnam they did not follow us. If we leave Iraq, the terrorists would follow us.

Some would suggest that it is a shame that we are fighting them there. I say it is wonderful that we are fighting them there rather than here.

Mr. MURTHA. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself as much time as I may use.

I didn't mean to imply that the gentleman from California is sanctimonious. It is just some of the speakers have been sanctimonious. But that is not the point. We want the same thing. We want stability in the Middle East. It is important. We use more oil than any other country in the world, 20.6 million barrels of oil a day. The closest to us is China with 6 million barrels of oil a day. The whole free world wants stability in the Middle East. It is how we get it.

What I am saying is there is more instability in Iraq because of us, because of our troops. They have become occupiers. This is the thing that worries me. That is why I think we have to change direction.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN of California. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HUNTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 30 seconds to the gentlewoman from Wyoming (Mrs. CUBIN).

Mrs. CUBIN. Mr. Speaker, there is no greater obligation we have to the people of this Nation than to protect their freedom and their safety. We owe it to the public to pursue those who seek to destroy our way of life.

Democrat wartime President Franklin Roosevelt understood this when he said, "When you see a rattlesnake poised to strike, you do not wait until he has struck before you crush him."

Policies of appeasement did not work against Nazi Germany. They did not work against the Soviet Union, and they will most certainly not work against terrorists right now plotting violence and bloodshed against our citizens.

Our actions taken in Iraq and Afghanistan are aimed unequivocally at crushing global terrorism. We must complete our mission.

Mr. MURTHA. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I would just point out to the Speaker that Franklin Roosevelt might have said that, but he waited till they attacked us at Pearl Harbor before he took any action. He tried to build up the forces, but certainly didn't take

any military action until we were attacked at Pearl Harbor.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HUNTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Almost, in fact a little bit more than 61 years ago, the 101st Airborne parachuted into Normandy. And a few miles away the Fourth Infantry Division was wading through bloody waters onto Utah Beach. And thousands of miles away, the First Marine Division was culminating a series of island operations, including Guadalcanal, Pelalieu and many others, very dangerous, very bloody. We call them the Greatest Generation. And you know, today, the 101st Airborne anchors the Sunni Triangle. The Fourth Infantry Division, including many of the grandchildren of those great members of the Greatest Generation, are in Baghdad. And the First Marine Division is out in that very dangerous al Anbar Province in towns called Ramadi and Fallujah. I call them the New Greatest Generation.

But there is a difference between them and their forefathers of the 101st and the Fourth Infantry Division and the First Marine Division, and that is that the Greatest Generation of World War II had a Congress that was united behind their mission. I think we owe it to this New Greatest Generation to unite behind their mission, and not just because it is their mission and we are Congress and we oversee national security, but because we gave them the mission. We voted overwhelmingly in the House of Representatives to go into Afghanistan and Iraq. We, not somebody else, we gave them the mission. They have carried out that mission. They have carried it out in thousands of firefights at 10,000-foot elevations in Afghanistan, taking down safehouses in Mosul and Tikrit and Fallujah and many other areas in Iraq, winning 45,000 bronze stars for valor and meritorious service, among many other medals; and you know, all the while taking on the enemy, they inoculated over 5 million children against diseases, re-stood up over 3,000 schools, built hundreds of hospitals, and they carried the free elections of the Afghan and Iraqi people on their shoulders. That is why we had free elections in those two countries.

Now, you know, when we started this thing, and if you look at the literature of al Qaeda and the terrorist organizations, they question the capability of the American troops. They no longer question that capability. Mr. Zarqawi does not question that capability. Saddam Hussein does not question that capability. They have been convinced of it in thousands of firefights. They don't question the troops' commitment to this mission. And the troops' commitment to this mission is manifested in reenlistments rates. For the Fourth ID, the Third ID, the 101st, the 10th Mountain Division, the First Marines, reenlistments, after multiple tours of more than 130 percent of the requirement.

They don't question the continued commitment of the President. They have seen this President go through highs and lows in the polls and continue his commitment to the mission that we launched together. The only question they have now is us. They question our commitment to this mission. And this resolution, Mr. Speaker, is a chance to unite this House of Representatives by restating our commitment to this mission. Let's do it so that tonight, when those troops come home from their patrols and their reconns and their convoys and they look at the news, they are going to say the United States House of Representatives, they stand with us.

Mr. MURTHA. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

The problem is, 42 percent of the people don't know what the mission is. When I talk to the young folks in the hospitals, they tell me their mission is to go out and find IEDs. That is explosive devices. Their mission is to be a target.

Hey, we all agree with everything that the gentleman from California said, Mr. Speaker. We agree. We support the troops. We have done everything we can do. It is the policy we disagree with. It is a change in direction we want. We are staying and we are paying and we are paying with troops' lives. We are paying with financial resources.

The first gulf war the United States paid \$5 billion. We had 500,000 American troops. We had 160,000 coalition troops. President Bush I did a marvelous job, one of the finest international coalitions in the history of the United States. They paid and they produced and they supported. But he knew how far he could go. He understood the enemy and he understood what could be done. And he was willing to change direction. When they thought they had enough troops, General Schwartzkopf said he needed more troops, he put more troops on the ground.

So I am convinced all of us agree we want a solution. But the American troops, unfortunately, have become occupiers. And 80 percent of the Iraqis want us out of there. And I have a piece of paper here that the Vice President of Iraq, here, Tuesday night on the way home on Air Force One, President Bush said there are concerns about commitment in keeping our troops there. They are worried about it to a person. They said they will leave before capable.

Then the Associated Press reports, yesterday morning Iraqi's Vice President has asked President Bush for a timetable for withdrawal of foreign forces from Iraq. And Iraq's Vice President's office said Vice President of Iraq made the request during his meeting with Bush on Tuesday when the U.S. President made a surprise visit. I supported him, the President said. Eighty percent of the Iraqi people want us out. They want to solve these problems

themselves. The Americans cannot force democracy on Iraq.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. Daniel E. LUNGREN of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield for the purpose of making a unanimous consent request to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MILLER).

(Mr. MILLER of Florida asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, having returned from my fourth trip to Iraq over the Memorial Day break, I rise in support of H. Res. 861.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of America. I rise in support of our active troops and those who have given their lives and those who will give their lives so that we will prevail in this global war on terrorism. These troops are part of an all-volunteer force that is the envy of the world.

I rise to reassure the American and Iraqi people that we reject any timetable for the withdrawal or redeployment of U.S. forces in Iraq before victory.

Al Qaeda and other terrorist organizations have attacked our family, neighbors and friend numerous times over the last three decades. What has been the response? For the most part, there has not been an adequate response.

And Mr. Speaker—that is hard to admit. Some would tell you we didn't respond due to lack of political will, others would say America just didn't have the stomach.

From the killing of 241 U.S. service members in Beirut in 1983 to the attack on the USS *Cole* in 2001, America responded in a cautious manner.

This is no longer the case. Due to the events of September 11, 2001 our country was forced to reevaluate our defensive and offensive strategies.

Led by our Commander-in-Chief and with the support of the Congress, our government decided to take the fight to every cave the enemy hides in—sending an unmistakable message. We will fight the enemy overseas and prevent him from reaching our shores.

Having been to Iraq during the recent Memorial Day holiday, I am pleased to report the message is getting across. Our enemies are starting to realize that America and its allies are not leaving and are not intimidated.

I say to the Iraqi people—we will not abandon you. We are committed to the completion of the mission to create a sovereign, free, secure and united Iraq.

During my 4 trips to Iraq in the last 3 years I have been heartened by the continued resolve of our forces. After receiving briefings from the Generals, I always make sure to spend an equal amount of time with the senior enlisted men and junior officers who are leading at the tip of the spear. The casualty count among this group is rising—and that is hard to grapple with—but it is for a purpose.

A man who was responsible for so many of these casualties—Zarqawi—is now dead. He was killed by a 500 pound bomb dropped from an F-16. This weapon and this method of employment were thoroughly developed and tested at Eglin Air Force Base in Okaloosa County, Florida.

The dedicated air force active duty, civilian personnel and contractors from the Test and

Evaluation Community and the Air Force Research Laboratory can be equally proud.

I would like to remind my colleagues and the American people of the courage it must take to vote in a country that has never known democracy while under the threat of death—simply for making one's voice heard. This courage is commendable and is a cause worth fighting for.

Mr. Speaker, America and her citizens are strong. We will continue to lead the way in showing the Iraqi people how to establish a free and democratic nation and we and they will never forget the sacrifice of those who made their democracy possible.

Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield for the purpose of making a unanimous consent request to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. PRICE).

(Mr. PRICE of Georgia asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the resolution.

International Terrorism—when we discuss this very important issue—an issue of life and death—not just for each of us individually, but for our nation and way of life—it is imperative that we begin our discussion—at the beginning. And that beginning wasn't on 9-11! We've been under attack for at least 30 years.

We did not want this fight—we did not invite this fight—we did not wish to engage in this battle. However, once our enemy crossed over the line—confirmed for us and the world—that they were unwilling to respect international law, respect individual liberty, respect sovereignty of nations—and that they were willing and desirous of engaging in mortal battle—no other option was left to us or the civilized world.

Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, on January 23, 2005, said: "We have declared a fierce war on this evil principle of democracy and those who follow this wrong ideology."

So, this discussion today comes down to a fundamental question—what is the appropriate strategy and tactic to adopt to win the War on Terror?

Will we withdraw and simply defend—a policy of isolation and containment—or will we aggressively combat terrorism—and take the battle to our enemy?

This war is unlike any other in history—with-out a doubt.

Our enemy has no single home. It recruits and trains its army from nations around the world. The only unifying element is hate—hate for the West—hate for democracy—hate for freedom of religion—hate for liberty.

The only message our enemy understands is force. Period. Terrorists don't negotiate—terrorists don't compromise—terrorists are not interested in peace. To them, that's weakness.

Thankfully we've stayed the course. Thankfully we've persevered in both Iraq and Afghanistan. The greatest threat to terrorism is freedom, liberty and democracy—in the Middle East and beyond.

Today the terrorists are truly on the run.

Last week U.S. and Iraqi forces eliminated Al Qaeda in Iraq's top terrorist—Abu Musab Al Zarqawi. This was accomplished with excellent intelligence—knowing where the bad guys were and when. And this information came from Iraqi civilians—that is a very positive sign.

This important step demonstrates many things: we will hunt down terrorists and eliminate them wherever they are hiding, the shackles of decades long terrorism are being removed from the Middle East, Iraqi security forces are stepping up to the challenge; Iraqi citizens want to be free of terrorists and they are not going to sit idly by.

Success breeds success.

Never has that been more evident than this past week.

While Zarqawi was eliminated—finding him brought a treasure trove of information allowing U.S. and Iraqi forces to dismantle many more pieces of Al Qaeda's puzzle.

Success breeds success.

Iraq just this past week selected 3 more officials—cabinet ministers—to serve in its standing government.

Success breeds success.

It is also important for us to recall and reiterate why we are engaged in this war.

It is imperative during this debate that we re-examine the conditions that required the United States to take military action in Afghanistan and Iraq in the aftermath of the attacks of September 11, 2001.

Just a short look at recent history—just the last 27 years—vividly demonstrates the death, destruction and terror brought to Americans by our enemy.

November 4, 1979—Iranian radicals seized the U.S. Embassy in Tehran and held 53 hostages for 444 days.

April 18, 1983—Sixty-three people, including the CIA's Middle East directory, were killed when our U. S. Embassy in Beirut was bombed.

October 23, 1983—simultaneous suicide bomb attacks on American and French compounds in Beirut, Lebanon; killing 242 Americans and 58 French troops.

March 16, 1984—Islamic Jihad kidnapped and later murdered Political Officer William Buckley in Beirut, Lebanon.

October 7, 1985—Achille Lauro Hijacking—terrorists seized the Italian cruise liner and murdered one American invalid in a wheelchair.

April 5, 1986—Berlin Discotheque Bombing—Two U.S. soldiers were killed and 79 American servicemen were injured in a Libyan bomb attack in West Berlin, West Germany.

December 21, 1988—Pan Am 103 Bombing—Pan Am 103 blown up over Lockerbie, Scotland by bomb placed by Libyan terrorists—all 259 people on board were killed.

February 26, 1993—First World Trade Center Bombing—car bomb exploded in an underground garage killing 6 people and injuring over 1000.

November 13, 1995—car bomb explodes at U.S. military complex in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, killing one U.S. citizen, several foreign national employees of the U.S. government and over 40 others.

June 25, 1996—Khobar Towers Bombing—a truck bomb in Dhahran destroys Khobar Towers, a U.S. Air Force barracks, killing 19 U.S. military personnel and wounding 515 people, including 240 U.S. personnel.

August 7, 1998—U.S. Embassy Bombings in East Africa—two coordinated attacks on U.S. Embassies in Kenya and Tanzania—killing over 300.

October 12, 2000—Attack on U.S.S. Cole—a small dingy carrying explosives rammed the destroyer U.S.S. Cole, killing 17 sailors and injuring 39.

September 11, 2001—Terrorist Attacks on U.S. Homeland—Two hijacked airliners crashed into the twin towers of the World Trade Center. Soon thereafter, the Pentagon was struck by a third hijacked plane. A fourth hijacked plane, suspected to be bound for a high-profile target in Washington, crashed into a field in southern Pennsylvania. The attacks killed 3,025 U.S. citizens and other nationals.

Treating these incidents as crimes—not acts of war—and providing reactionary measures rather than moving pro actively—will not work. How do we know? Because that is precisely what we did for decades—and the consequence was 9–11.

The attacks we witnessed that day serve as a reminder of the dangers we face as a nation in a post-9/11 world. We can no longer expect oceans between us and our enemies to keep us safe.

Policy of containment has been proven to be a dismal failure.

Just as the battle in Afghanistan was not simply to remove the Taliban. The battle in Iraq was not simply to remove Saddam Hussein and his murderous regime.

One has to look no further than the action of our enemy to see that we are fighting those who want to bring their brand of terror and fear to our shores.

We must not forget those threats that have been disrupted here at home and on our allies: the West Coast Airliner Plot; The Heathrow Airport Plot; and The Jose Padilla Plot.

The campaign against the United States and its allies is ambitious, simple and clear.

Terrorists will stop at nothing to achieve their distorted sense of reality.

Now, we could have easily stayed out of this conflict . . .

However, giving terrorists free reign would not make us any safer—history has proven that.

The price would be more innocent lives lost—more bombings—and not an ounce of peace.

We must not be held hostage by terrorism—that is not living in liberty and freedom!

There are defining moments every generation must face. For this generation that defining moment is how we engage in this War on Terror—highlighted by a very different post 9–11 world. When we came to that defining moment—that tragic day—we, as a nation with our allies around the world, decided we would not allow terrorists to win.

The choice is clear, our resolve is clear. We will and must prevail.

Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN of California. Mr. Speaker, we have just two more speakers, the whip and then our majority leader.

Mr. HUNTER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that Mr. LUNGREN control the remaining 30 seconds of our time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5½ minutes to the distinguished majority whip, Mr. BLUNT.

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding, and I thank you for presiding over this important

debate and for the opportunity to address the House as this debate nears its conclusion.

Let's be clear about what is at stake today as we debate this issue. Whether or not we are successful in winning the global war on terror will define the future, and it will define this generation in the eyes of future historians. Our resolve is being tested by clever enemies with primitive philosophies of religion and government. When my colleagues cast their vote today, they are sending a message about what they believe America's capable of doing and about whether the global war on totalitarianism is worth fighting.

Our actions here on the House floor are being watched not only by our enemies, but by our friends and allies as well. The message we send will be received by the coalition partners fighting with us, the people and leaders of Afghanistan and Iraq, and the Americans fighting for peace and freedom who believe in their mission. This vote, I know, is not being taken lightly, and believe me, it should not be taken lightly. The resolution we are considering is clear and unambiguous. We are declaring that the United States will prevail in the global war on terror.

□ 1030

This war is not a war of choice, but one initiated and sustained by the action of terrorists. It is being fought in many parts of the world with all the diplomatic, cultural, financial and, when absolutely necessary, military resources available to us. In places like Iraq and Afghanistan, terrorists have chosen to make a stand. They understand the only way they can defeat the United States is not in battle with our soldiers, who are the best in the world, but in the battle of public opinion. Information is the key weapon in that battle.

Over the week of Memorial Day, I was able to travel to both Afghanistan and Iraq to see again firsthand our Nation's efforts to combat terrorists and assist in the establishment of modern democracies. Universally in both countries, the people we talked to, including the leaders that we met with, told our delegation that withdrawing American troops before democracy has had a chance to take root would lead to disaster.

In Afghanistan, President Karzai believes that the southern part of the country is keeping a lid on the Taliban precisely because of the presence of our troops. He believes his countrymen uniquely understand how important it is that our soldiers, American soldiers, maintain a visible role, even as the day-to-day operations are often turned over to our NATO allies. And while we were there, our ambassador was able to report to President Karzai that both the Canadians and the Dutch had been vigorously and successfully engaged the day before. But President Karzai was equally vigorous in his sense that the commitment of America was the

commitment that the Afghan people were worried about.

Today we will tell our friend, President Karzai, that America will not abandon our Afghan friends, that we will not close that embassy again and lock the door and walk away for 10 years.

In Iraq, which al Qaeda has call the central front, and that is their quote, not mine, the central front in their war against the West, the sentiment for America to stay is even more pronounced. In Baghdad I spoke with Speaker Mashhadani, a Sunni politician, a leader who had been very opposed to the United States coming to Iraq, but now believes that the presence of the United States, again, until democracy takes root, is essential to the establishment of democracy in that country.

And while visiting the newly formed Kurdish regional government in Erbil, I spoke with those leaders who have recently put aside generations of differences in favor of a unified Iraq. Officials from the new Iraqi Government I met with gave me additional reasons to be hopeful for the future. These elected leaders are committed to governing. Their predecessors had been committed to a political goal in each case, to write a Constitution, to conduct a temporary election, to conduct a permanent election.

This government is the first democratically elected government in the history of not just the country of Iraq that has only been in existence since World War I, but the history of the people who live in this area have never before had a permanent democratically elected government. This government also happens to be a broad-based government that is committed to serve.

I have said many times before, as many have said on this floor in the last 2 days, that only the Iraqis are ultimately capable of solving their problems. The only way to solve them is through increased transparency, economic reform, and democratic participation in government. None of this will be easy, and I have nothing but admiration for Iraqi leaders who are undertaking these tasks in the face of enormous personal risk.

It is in the context of this personal risk that I appeal to my colleagues, who live peacefully and safely in the world's oldest constitutional democracy, the United States of America, not to turn their backs on the leaders of the world's newest democracy.

Mr. MURTHA. Mr. Speaker, I have three unanimous consent requests.

I yield for the purpose of making a unanimous consent request to the gentlewoman from Minnesota (Ms. MCCOLLUM).

Ms. MCCOLLUM of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to put my statement in the RECORD on House Resolution 861.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Minnesota?

There was no objection.

Ms. MCCOLLUM of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker today we mourn the death of the 2,500th American soldier in Iraq and are disgusted by the headline in yesterday's Washington Post stating, "Iraq Amnesty Plan May Cover Attacks on U.S. Military." With another American soldier killed and the news of Iraqi Prime Minister al-Maliki seeking amnesty for insurgents who have killed and maimed U.S. troops, this House debates H. Res. 861, a meaningless, nonbinding Republican resolution that is a political document designed as a partisan campaign ploy, not a serious attempt to address the failings and mismanagement of this disastrous Iraq policy. Our troops in Iraq are in harm's way, they are sacrificing tremendously for all Americans and the Iraqi people, and this Republican Congress honors their sacrifice with a farcical debate—it is shameful.

A majority of Americans know that the Bush administration's Iraq policy is strategically bankrupt and it has put U.S. troops in the untenable position of refereeing an Iraqi civil war. It is a policy that has made America less safe and more at risk in a dangerous world.

Earlier this week President Bush returned from a 5-hour visit to Baghdad and said, "I sense something different happening in Iraq." This profoundly unenlightened observation after 5 hours inside the safety of the "green zone" contrasts with U.S. troops who are on their third tour of duty in the midst of a chaotic, deadly and deteriorating civil war. This White House has made "victory" the basis for an end to the U.S. occupation of Iraq, but the only exit strategy this president has thus far developed was his own—for his departure from Baghdad after only 5 hours.

Outside of the safety and security of Baghdad's "green zone," there is "something different happening" and U.S. troops are surrounded by it—the depravity and brutality of an Iraqi civil war. Murderous militias, government sponsored death squads, paramilitary brigades, insurgents and organized criminals who kidnap and kill children—these are the forces that control neighborhoods, rule the streets and are on the payroll of Iraq's Ministry of the Interior.

Let me cite a May 7, 2006 article from the Los Angeles Times to underscore how different Iraq is today, "More Iraqi civilians were killed in Baghdad during the first 3 months of this year than in any time since the toppling of Saddam Hussein's regime—at least 3,800, many of them found hogtied and shot execution-style. Others were strangled, electrocuted, stabbed, garroted or hanged. Some died in bombings. Many bore signs of torture such as bruises, drill holes, burn marks, gouged eyes or severed limbs."

This horrific depravity does not reflect a global war on terror, it is a civil war and American troops have no business separating religious groups determined to kill each other in order to settle old scores or accumulate political power. "Now the killings are systematic, personal. Masked gunman storm into houses, and the victims—the majority of them Sunnis—are never seen alive. Such killings now claim nine times more lives than car bombings, according to figures provided by a high-ranking U.S. military official, who released them only on the condition of anonymity," the same Los Angeles Times article states.

Is this the vital American interest for which 2,500 Americans have given their lives? If we

don't stop these barbarous murders in Iraq does it really mean they will then bring their torture and executions to America's towns and neighborhoods as the Republican scare tactics purport? Of course not; this simple-minded "fight them over there so we don't have to fight them here" Republican rhetoric reflects their blindness to the real situation on the ground in Iraq. Iraq's endless domestic atrocities and brutality is their domestic tragedy, not a global phenomenon, but the Republicans are more interested in using this argument in their political campaigns than they are in bringing our troops home from this civil war safely.

We know that President Bush's stated premise for the war in Iraq, weapons of mass destruction, was a fabrication and a deceptive exaggeration. But is it now the duty of U.S. soldiers to police the death-squads that are operating within the Iraqi police and committing gross human rights violations? Is it the duty of our brave troops to disarm Shiite militias that are extensions of the Iraqi Government and responsible for imposing religious law and hunting down violators of their sect of faith? Absolutely not.

The mantra from President Bush and the Republican Congress is "stay the course." It is an outrageous and irrational strategy that reflects the bankruptcy and myopic nature of this administration's assessment of the situation inside Iraq. An occupied Iraq will keep U.S. troops as targets of Iraq's nationalist insurgents and never allow that country to escape the current security crisis, political crisis and financial crisis. Only if this occupation ends is Iraq capable of truly being a sovereign nation that is responsible for its own problems and future.

Instead of allowing Iraq to determine its own destiny, President Bush has made an indefinite U.S. military commitment to Iraq, almost, assuring tens of thousands of additional U.S. soldiers will be sent to confront Iraq's problems. Since U.S. forces are in the fourth year of a war that was intended to last only months and the concept of a U.S. victory over all the various factions of murderers, criminals and armed insurgents is delusional, one can only surmise that U.S. troops will be in Iraq when the Bush administration leaves office in January 2009. For this reason, Congress needs to dictate a clear position that will allow for the redeployment of U.S. troops within the region to defend U.S. interests and refocus our attention to the war on terrorism. This will allow for a restoration of Iraqi sovereignty and the opportunity for Iraqis to determine their own future.

The Bush administration's mismanagement of its Iraq policy from a military and geopolitical perspective is only exacerbated by the tremendous investment of U.S. tax dollars that have yielded such unremarkable results. To date, more than \$320 billion has been borrowed and spent in Iraq. Every single dollar has been added to our Nation's national debt with the burden for the financial cost of this war on the backs of all of our children and the grandchildren, including those of the very soldiers who are now fighting and sacrificing in Iraq. Image, this Congress and White House have looked the other way as almost \$9 billion has simply disappeared into a system in which corruption is endemic and financial mismanagement the norm. Every American should feel betrayed by this Congress and its

disregard for oversight and accountability with regard to the hard-earned tax dollars of U.S. citizens.

As Americans fight and die in Iraq and Americans pay hundreds of billions of dollars for this war, it is remarkable to hear the words of Iraq's Prime Minister al-Maliki. President Bush earlier this week, in a moment of poetry, looked into the prime minister's eyes. It was unclear what the president saw, but we do know the words the prime minister has used on June 1, 2006 to describe U.S. troops when he said, "They (troops in the American led coalition) crush them (Iraqi civilians) with their vehicles and kill them just on suspicion. This is completely unacceptable." The Prime Minister called the U.S. violence against Iraqis a "daily phenomenon." Now, President Bush's soul-mate wants to provide amnesty for those who murdered and maimed as many as 20,000 U.S. troops. Is this why the Republicans in Congress want to stay the course in Iraq?

Mr. Speaker, there is a civil war—a 21st Century civil war—raging in Iraq. It is based on religion and historical events that can never be remedied by 130,000 U.S. troops whether they remain as an occupying force for 1 more year or 50 years. What we have achieved in Iraq is certain. The end of Saddam's regime, three elections, an Iraqi constitution, a new permanent government and the training of more than 250,000 Iraq security forces are the frequently stated highlights of this war. These achievements are the sole result of U.S. troops and their sacrifice and bravery. Yet, this mission is confronting a reality that is darker and much more ominous in large part because this ill-conceived pre-emptive war has unleashed forces that are beyond the control of U.S. troops that are antithetical to U.S. interests.

On May 26, 2006, Tom Lasseter reported for Knight Ridder that "Southern Iraq, long touted as a peaceful region that's likely to be among the first areas returned to Iraqi control, is now dominated by Shiite Muslim warlords and militiamen who are laying the groundwork for an Islamic fundamentalist government, say senior British and Iraqi officials in the area."

Even with 130,000 U.S. troops and thousands more from coalition partners, Iraq is not on a path that will yield a free, democratic state in the Middle East. The occupation has cleared the way for the establishment of a theocratic order that will ensure clerics and militiamen dictate obedience to religious law—Sharia law—with absolutely zero tolerance for any form of pluralism. The current situation in Basra only highlights the incomprehensible ignorance of the designers of U.S. Iraq policy to consider the powerful cultural and religious forces the U.S. invasion of Iraq unleashed. Tragically, the 2,500 U.S. troops who have been killed, the almost 20,000 who have been wounded and the tens of thousands of Iraqi women, children and men who have been killed—often times brutally—have suffered the consequences of President Bush's Iraq policy.

Mr. Speaker, H. Res. 861 purposely avoids the dangerous reality and dismisses the tremendous challenges confronting U.S. troops in Iraq and America's real challenges with regard to terrorism and extremist threats. This resolution is a dishonest attempt to inject raw politics into a congressional debate that will do nothing to keep America secure or bring U.S. troops home safe and soon. As we look to the

future, my intention is to continue to support a comprehensive strategy to combat terrorism, keep America secure from real strategic threats and to redeploy U.S. troops from Iraq's civil war. All Americans support our troops, but it is time for Congress to support a policy that ensures U.S. troops have an exit strategy from Iraq. This resolution should be defeated and I will vote against it.

Mr. MURTHA. Mr. Speaker, I yield for the purpose of making a unanimous consent request to the gentleman from Washington (Mr. DICKS).

(Mr. DICKS asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DICKS. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to the resolution.

Mr. Speaker, it has been my honor to serve as a member of the Defense Appropriations Committee for 28 years here in the House of Representatives and to often engage in debates over important issues of national defense and national security here on the floor of this Chamber. It has always been my view that partisanship should end at the water's edge, and that all of us here in this body have a solemn obligation to consider the best interests of the Nation as we debate military involvement, especially at times when U.S. troops are involved in ongoing military actions.

With that said, let me make two points about this debate today over H. Res. 861. First, the House Leadership has brought this Resolution before the full membership of the House with the assertion that it will launch a full and open debate on U.S. policy in Iraq. It is unfortunate, Mr. Speaker, that the process of drafting the Resolution we are to consider today was totally closed to members of the Democratic party, and that the expressed intent of the Republican Leadership, as betrayed by the memorandum that was sent to Republican members by the Majority Leader, was to demonstrate that the Democrats are interested in "conceding defeat on the battlefield" and that we as a party "sheepishly dismiss the challenges that America faces in a post 9/11 world." Mr. Speaker, no political party has a monopoly on patriotism, and I can state with certainty that no member of either political party has any interest in conceding defeat or in ignoring real threats to our national security. This type of partisanship is unnecessary at any time, but especially in this debate today.

Secondly, if we are to have a full and open debate over U.S. policy in Iraq, it should be an ongoing activity here in the House, where we legitimately share the constitutional responsibility to "provide for the common defense" and to provide the funds necessary to adequately defend our Nation against aggression and any threats to the security of our people. As any observer of the House of Representatives knows, since the start of the war in Iraq we have rarely debated the merits of our policy in Iraq, and we have conducted very little oversight as we have spent \$318 billion, as 2,500 American soldiers have been killed, and more than 18,000 troops have been wounded in battle. On the eve of the 2002 elections we were pushed into a premature debate and vote authorizing the use of force, based on what we now know was inaccurate or overstated information about the capability and intentions of the Iraqi government. Since the start of the military action in Iraq three years

ago, we have been called together in this Chamber to debate resolutions commending the abilities and the bravery of our troops, which all of us in this Chamber were united in approving. But we have not, Mr. Speaker, conducted what I believe is the proper level of oversight of the decisions that took us to war, the decisions about troop levels at the outset of the conflict, the post conflict mistakes that were made, the handling of the insurgency and the overall plan for victory and redeployment of our troops. It is not sufficient to bring these occasional resolutions to the floor, drafted by the Republican caucus, intended to express political talking points rather than stimulate genuine discussion about our policy in Iraq.

So as we debate this particular Resolution today it must be said that all Members of this House support the troops who have been engaged in the conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq, and that we are all encouraged when terrorists such as Abu Musab al-Zarqawi are brought to justice. To imply any different in today's debate would be an injustice.

But that is not all that this Resolution states. Nor is it all that it implies by the words that are printed in it or, even more revealingly, by the things that are omitted from it. Again, this is why it is inappropriate to draft a Resolution of this importance without any input or consultation with Members of the Democratic Party, and why this exercise today is not, in my judgment, worthy of the trust that the American people put in their Representatives here in the House.

The Resolution we are debating today, Mr. Speaker, misstates the mission of the United States actions in Iraq—implying very directly that there was a direct relationship between the 9/11 attacks and our invasion of Iraq, in addition to ignoring the use of the WMD threat in justifying the invasion to our coalition partners and to the American people. Beyond that, the only actions it says that we, as the House of Representatives, resolve to promote are actions that support the status quo, inferring that the Members of this Chamber are clearly satisfied with the status quo and believe the Administration's policy is headed in the right direction. I would contend, Mr. Speaker, that very few of the Members of this Chamber actually are satisfied with the status quo, and certainly it is clear that the American people, whom we represent individually and collectively in this House, believe we need to change course and adopt a new strategy in Iraq.

That is precisely what I believe the House should be doing today, instead of debating the merits of a partisan measure that effectively congratulates Secretary Rumsfeld for pursuing a responsible course of action. We need to change direction. Our strategy in Iraq is not working. It will not produce the victory we all say we believe in. Nor will it allow us to see far enough ahead to the time when we can legitimately redeploy our troops and bring them home. What has been needed, and what is still required, is accountability, and we can only accomplish that, Mr. Speaker, by greater oversight, more thoughtful questioning of the decisions that are made at the Pentagon and in the field, and more openness in considering new directions and new strategies, even if it risks conceding that some of the actions this Administration has taken have been wrong. The Resolution we are addressing today, Mr.

Chairman, allows for no such questioning and it only assumes that we are all committed to a strategy that has put us in a position from which no one can say how long it will be . . . a year, two years, five years . . . before our mission is accomplished and our troops can return home.

It is not irresponsible for us to suggest that other members of our coalition in Iraq should be assuming a greater share of the burden. It is not irresponsible for us to suggest that we should be scaling back our role, accelerating the training of the Iraqi forces and encouraging the new Iraqi leaders to understand that they need to take charge of their own government, their own security and their own economy. We are helping, and should continue to help, restore the power grids, the water supplies and the oil production facilities so the Iraqi people will see signs of progress that thus far have disappointed them. We must continue to encourage the new Iraqi Prime Minister al-Maliki and his government in its campaign for national reconciliation and in its effort to disarm the militias, reduce the sectarian violence and bring social and economic stability to the nation. I remain hopeful about the future of a Democratic Iraq, but as we work with the new government to accomplish these objectives, Mr. Speaker, I believe it may be time to take the training wheels off, and to communicate directly to the Iraqis that they are running their own nation, as unsteady as it may seem in the near future.

But above all, what we should be doing today in the House of Representatives is sending a clear signal to the American people and to the international community that we are in favor of changing course . . . of moving beyond the status quo and adopting a new and more successful strategy to achieve a peaceful and stable Iraq.

This Resolution, Mr. Speaker, unquestioningly endorses the status quo, and for that reason I cannot and will not support it.

Mr. MURTHA. Mr. Speaker, I yield for the purpose of making a unanimous-consent request to the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. KIND).

(Mr. KIND asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. KIND. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the resolution.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend the outstanding service provided by our men and women in the armed forces for the terrific job they do for us across the globe each and every day, often in very difficult and dangerous circumstances. This is especially true today in places such as Afghanistan and Iraq.

Active military, guard, and reserves forces from western Wisconsin have answered the call to service in the most recent conflict with global terrorism. I have been to numerous deployment ceremonies and witnessed the anguish in the hearts and faces of family and friends as they say goodbye to their loved ones being deployed abroad for lengthy stays. I have also been to numerous welcome home ceremonies to honor their service and to thank them for their sacrifice.

During my three visits to Iraq, I met with our military command and troops in the field, as well as numerous Iraqi leaders and civilians. I can honestly say that nothing made me prouder to be an American than seeing the performance of our troops in the field. They

are well-trained, well-motivated and an inspiration to us all. They are, in short, the best America has to offer. I am sure everyone here today wishes them godspeed and safe travels as they carry out their missions.

Specifically, I would like to take a moment to recognize the soldiers from the Third Congressional District of Wisconsin who have lost their lives in the Iraq war: First Lieutenant Jeremy Wolfe of Menomonie, Major Christopher Splinter of Platteville, Private First Class Bert Hoyer of Ellsworth, Private First Class Andrew Halverson of Muscoda, Staff Sergeant Todd Olson of Loyal, Staff Sergeant Andrew Bossert of Fountain City, Specialist Charles Kaufman of Fairchild, Sergeant First Class Trevor Diesing of Plum City, Benjamin Smith of Hudson, Private First Class Anthony Gaunk of Sparta, Sergeant Andy Allen Stevens of Tomah, and Petty Officer 2nd Class Jaime S. Jaenke of Bay City. I would also like to recognize Christopher Lem of Lyndon Station who lost his life while working in Iraq as an independent contractor.

Furthermore, I would like to highlight the good work of the 128th infantry division out of western Wisconsin; the 1158th transportation company out of Tomah, Black River Falls, and Beloit; the Wisconsin Army National Guards' 229th Engineer Company out of Prairie du Chien and Platteville; the 829th Engineer Detachment out of Richland Center; the Army Reserve's 652nd Engineer Company out of Ellsworth; and the 32nd Engineer Company out of Onalaska. These units have served or are serving in Iraq, and I am extraordinarily proud of their service to our country.

But as good and capable as our troops are, it is incumbent upon us policy-makers to do everything in our power to get the policies right. We must ensure that they are fighting on our behalf for the right reasons and with the support and resources they need to do their job as safely and effectively as possible.

That's why this discussion we're having today is a disappointment. This resolution is a political document timed just before the fall elections rather than a serious substantive debate about our involvement in Iraq, Afghanistan and across the globe. Why else would the majority republican party prevent amendments from being offered or even the right of the others to offer an alternative resolution. Such an alternative resolution would more honestly focus on the shortcomings of this administration's policies, which has been highlighted by numerous retired military officers in recent months. Only through an honest assessment of those shortcomings will we have the ability to find the solutions and make adjustments to the goals being pursued.

As someone who supported the Iraq resolution in the fall of 2002, I believed it was important that we get weapons inspection teams back in Iraq to check on the status of Saddam Hussein's WMD capability. I also believed at the time that Hussein would not allow inspection teams back in unless there was a credible threat of force hanging over his head.

To this day, those who opposed the resolution have not been able to explain how they would have accomplished getting inspection teams back in Iraq or whether they viewed that as an important objective.

After we were successful in getting inspection teams back in, however, I led the effort in congress, with representative Sherrod Brown, to send the president a letter signed by 150 of

our colleagues to give the inspection teams more time to do their job. At that time, we were informed in intelligence briefings that we were cooperating with those inspection teams by directing them to suspected sites of WMD. They, however, were not finding what the president suspected Hussein was hiding.

I felt increasingly uncomfortable with what I perceived to be faulty intelligence information given to us members of congress and the manipulation of intelligence to fit a preconceived ideological outcome.

Rather than have the intelligence facts shape our policy, I believe today that it was preconceived notions or ideology that distorted the intelligence to make the case for war. Even former Secretary of State Colin Powell has acknowledged his disappointment with the intelligence information he used to make the case before the United Nations. Numerous intelligence officers and State Department Officials have expressed similar reservations.

I also felt increasingly concerned about the President's haste to go to war, the lack of real effort to build international support, the lack of a plan for the day after or even a clear exit strategy once we got there. We now know by many retired generals, the president ignored the advice of our military leaders. My big regret is in believing the president when he said that the decision to go to war would be a matter of last resort. That is what the resolution required but instead the president ordered the inspection teams out of Iraq, even though they wanted to stay and finish their work, and then he ordered our military in. Today, our troops and our country are paying a very high price in loss of lives and resources due to this rush to war.

I was concerned that the main threat against the United States, Al Qaeda, was still a global threat with global reach, and that the person who was directly responsible for 9-11, Osama Bin Laden, was still at large and safe. I believed the President was taking his eye off the ball in Afghanistan and not doing everything in our power to bring those responsible for 9-11 to justice. It sends a terrible message to would-be terrorists who may be interested in striking us that all they have to do is go in hiding and lie low until we get distracted on another adventure.

Instead, the President should have, with the support of the American people and international community which we enjoyed at the time, made it our mission to never rest, never sleep until those responsible for 9-11 were brought to justice. Instead he diverted precious resources and personnel from Afghanistan and redirected them into Iraq. As a consequence, Osama Bin Laden is still at large, the Taliban are reconstituting themselves and Al Qaeda remains a global threat.

But we are where we are today. The question now is how do we move forward and what is at stake. Now that we have gone into Iraq, I believe the outcome in Iraq is important, not only for the Iraqi people, to whom we owe a duty to be responsible, but also for the region and for our Nation's long-term security interest. If the Iraqi people are successful in establishing a representative government, a government that respects human rights, religious tolerance, minority rights and the empowerment of women in their society, then Iraq could become a powerful model for change and reform in a region of the world that's in desperate need of reform.

I believe that a precipitous withdrawal from Iraq today will leave chaos, bloodshed and civil war in our wake. I believe that setting an artificial time for withdrawal will force our policy to merely revolve around that date rather than on the mission to be accomplished. And I've been informed by our military command in Iraq as well as our troops, that they do not desire a date certain because we could be setting them up for failure. They fear that conditions could change on the ground that they have no control over which might make adhering to that date difficult or ill-advised. They do not want artificial dates for the sake of political expediency.

I also believe, however, that this must be a crucial year of transition for us. Now that the Iraqis have established a coalition government and now that we have helped train over 250,000 Iraqi security forces, now is the time to put pressure on the Iraqi people to take control of their own future, through self-government and security responsibilities. We cannot do this for them; we cannot stay there indefinitely as the President proposes; we cannot want a free, stable and secure Iraq more than the Iraqi people want it. Such a change in tactics will enable us to begin the redeployment of our troops first within Iraq, off the front lines, then within the region and eventually back home to their families. It's time for a responsible and successful exit strategy to be implemented. In short, it's time to take the training wheels off.

There have been recent successes in Iraq that we all can applaud. Thanks should be given to our troops in their successful campaign against Abu Musab Al Zarqawi, the notorious and ruthless terrorist whose goal was to create chaos and destruction and fan the flames of civil war.

The Iraqis should be commended for finally, 5 months after national elections, forming a coalition government in which to govern, as well as making the important appointments to the interior and defense ministries.

Yet, even though our forces have proven they can kill the likes of Zarqawi, the question remains whether we can defeat Zarqawi? That is a question that should be discussed and debated.

Purple fingers alone do not make a democracy. Democratic institution building is vital, yet this administration is slashing funding for these programs dedicated to creating viable, long-lasting democratic institutions in Iraq. Getting support for the new Iraqi government from the United Arab League and the international community is also crucial to Iraq's ultimate success or failure. But again, it is difficult to work together and leave together when you didn't go in together.

Clearly, current conditions do not lend for much optimism. Over three years into this conflict, electricity generation is still below prewar conditions. Oil production is still below prewar conditions. Access to safe, clean drinking water is still below prewar conditions. The level of violence against coalition forces and the Iraqi people are at an all time high. Sectarian militias within the country and police forces and growing in numbers and strength. Unemployment, at 45 percent, is at an all time high which creates abject poverty and provides fertile ground for militia recruitment and more sectarian violence throughout the country.

Crime and corruption is rampant and increasing. Iraqi reconstruction is way behind

schedule and infected with corruption and fraud. In my last visit to Iraq in October of 2005, I specifically sought explanations for the administration's failure to account for 9 billion dollars of missing reconstruction funds. No explanation could be given.

We're losing approximately 600 military personnel every month due to death or injuries. The administration is literally breaking our military with no plan to save it. We are spending 9 billion a month in Iraq with no plan on how to pay for it other than more borrowing and spending and legacy of debt for our children to inherit.

If there is a big winner in Iraq, it is Iran. The record high oil prices that Iraq helped bring is directly benefiting Iran. Iran continues down the path of developing nuclear cap ability because we have no leverage over them. Iran's influence grows in the region with the majority Shiite population in southern Iraq and their support of Hamas who recently won Palestinian elections.

What our involvement in the Middle East clearly demonstrates is the need for a new energy policy for a new century so we can break our dependence on foreign oil. Today we are financing both sides of global terror, the huge costs of our military excursions but also, through the petro-dollars flowing to many regimes in the Middle East, to charities and schools that support the teaching of radical Islam and helps turn a new generation of young people against us in the region. And again, there is no plan by the administration for a new direction.

Equally disturbing is a recent study that shows that anti-Americanism is rampant and growing throughout the world, not just throughout the Arab and Muslim world but also in those countries that have been traditional friends and allies of the United States. No matter how good and capable our military is, we cannot fight this battle against global terror without help and assistance in the international community.

And still, here today, there is no plan by this administration to turn these conditions around. Iraq and these other challenging issues deserve an honest and open debate. Unfortunately, that opportunity was taken from us today by the majority who would rather whitewash conditions and pretend we're heading in the right direction. The American people deserve better than this, our troops and their families deserve better than this and this Congress deserves better than this. We must reassert our role as a co-equal branch of government, capable of conducting proper oversight, demanding accountability of this and future administrations, and willing to make policy changes to address and overcome the challenges we face today.

I end as I began, by offering heartfelt thanks and undying admiration for our men and women in uniform for their service to our country. May God provide his special blessings and care for those who fell in the line of duty. And may God continue to bless these United States of America.

Mr. MURTHA. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Let me go over what I said before.

All of us applaud the elections. All of us applaud the fact that Zarqawi was caught and the way he was caught, using Iraqis, giving information to Iraqis, and the United States operating and going in and eliminating Zarqawi.

The problem is because of the way we handled this at first, it got out of hand, and United States forces had to use overwhelming force in many cases. Fallujah, for instance, they went in and put 300,000 people outside their homes. Only 100,000 have come back.

Now, in Anbar Province they have no electricity at all. They have 2 million people there. They have zero projects in Anbar Province. That is the province where we had the most trouble. And then as I go through the liturgy of things that have happened with 130,000 troops there, this is the point: in May of 2003, we had 3,000 insurgents. In May of 2006, we have 20,000 insurgents. Now, we are there. The United States forces are occupying Iraq. The estimated number of foreign fighters in 2003 was 100. This comes from our intelligence people. And today there is an estimated 1,500. I think it is a little less than that, but it is estimated at 1,500.

Now, think. We have got 130,000 troops. They supposedly have 265,000, police and army trained. They have more confidence in their army than they have in the United States forces; yet there are only 1,000 foreign fighters. We have sectarian violence which is, in my estimation, a civil war and we are caught in between. Our troops have become the targets in a civil war.

All of us want this thing to be resolved. This is absolutely essential to stability in the free world because of the energy that comes from the Middle East. But how we do it is what we disagree with. As long as American troops are there, we actually are attracting terrorism.

Do you know who wants us in Iraq? al Qaeda wants us in Iraq. Iran wants us in Iraq. North Korea wants us in Iraq. Russia wants us in Iraq, and China wants us in Iraq. Why? Because we are depleting our financial resources and our human resources. Because we are destroying the future viability of the Army. We have \$50 billion in backlog right now for the Army, equipment that needs to be repaired. We have had to lower the standards for the Army, taking category 4s, which we did not take for a long time. We have had Air Force people and Navy people we transferred over to the Army because they do not have enough people. And we can talk about reenlistment, but they had no reenlistment bonuses that I know of during the old days. They now have up to \$150,000 that they pay people in reenlistment bonuses. So we are having real problems. I agree the troops are doing everything they can. Their mission is actually accomplished.

But let me go on. Monthly attacks on oil and gas assets: there were five in 2003, and it has gotten worse in 2006. Oil production is less than the prewar level. Oil production. Somebody complained not long ago that electricity doesn't make any difference. Let me tell you something. If you have ever gone without electricity in your house, you know that it makes a difference.

I am just saying that we have 130,000 troops there, and it is not going well. That is what I am saying. I am saying we have a problem, and our troops are not able to solve the problem. We have become the enemy. It has got to be won on the ground.

We are giving a microphone to be people like Zarqawi. We talk about Zarqawi. We talk about all these foreign leaders and what they say. Why should we pay attention to what they say? Why should we pay attention when Zarqawi says they are going to drive us out of there? That is just rhetoric. That is only rhetoric.

The only way it is going to be won is a change of direction. I gave some examples before. When President Reagan went into Beirut, he went in with 1,400 people, and he decided he needed to change direction. When he had the biggest tax cut in history at that time, he decided he had to make some adjustments later on. He changed direction.

When President Bush went into Somalia, President Clinton changed direction in Somalia because we made a mistake and we went after Adid. There are times in our history when we have to be big enough as a country to change direction.

All of us want the same thing: stability in the Middle East. All of us want to find a way to stabilize the Middle East. If we stay, we are going to pay; and we are going to pay long term. After the Vietnam War, it cost us through the Reagan administration to pay for it. Now, I voted against every tax cut because I felt very strongly that we couldn't fight a war and cut taxes. Now, there is an argument about that and you can argue about the benefit of the tax cut. But you cannot fight a war and have tax cuts. And we will have spent \$450 billion by the end of this fiscal year.

My proposal, if anybody has read, is to redeploy and be ready. Redeploy to the periphery. Now, we went after Zarqawi. What happened when we went after Zarqawi? The Iraqis reported to the Iraqis, and then the Iraqis reported to the United States forces and they worked together. This did not come from inside Iraq. This came from outside Iraq. This was the periphery. The F-16s came from outside of the country to go after him. And this was not something that just happened overnight. This was a long-term thing that they had been working on for a long time.

So in my estimation, the only way we can change things in Iraq is to change direction. It has to be changed on the ground. What we say here today, as President Abraham Lincoln said in the Gettysburg Address, is going to mean very little. It will get lost in the rhetoric. What means something is what happens on the ground. All of us support the troops. If you vote for the appropriation bill, the defense appropriation bill, you vote to support the troops. If you voted for the Armed Services bill, you voted to support the troops.

I believe this resolution, if you vote for it, you are voting to support a failed policy wrapped in illusion. And I would recommend to the Members they vote against this resolution.

Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN of California. Mr. Speaker, at this time it is my pleasure to yield the balance of my time to the distinguished majority leader (Mr. BOEHNER).

Mr. BOEHNER. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for yielding.

This week the House has engaged in an important debate on the war in Iraq and how best to combat terrorism in a post-9/11 world. And there are major differences between those of us who support a strong national defense and national security policy and understand what we have at stake and those who would prefer to retreat from the world stage and attempt to manage the threat of terrorism and the danger that it poses.

During the 1990s, the enemies of freedom used terror and violence in futile attempts to intimidate the United States and the cause of freedom. I will remind all of my colleagues that on February 26, 1993, we had the first World Trade Center bombing. It killed six people and injured more than 1,000 people. And on June 25, 1996, a U.S. facility in Saudi Arabia, the Khobar Towers, was bombed, killing 20 people and injuring some 372 more. On June 7, 1998, our embassy in Kenya was bombed, killed 213 people and injured 5,000 people. And on June 7, 1998, the same day, our embassy in Tanzania was bombed, killed 11 people, injured 68 more. On October 12, 2000, the USS *Cole* was bombed, killing 17 of our sailors and injuring 39 more.

What was our response? During the 1990s, world leaders looked at the mounting threat of terrorism, looked up, looked away, and hoped the problem would go away. But what happened on September 11, 2001? 3,000 Americans were killed by these same terrorists. And in a post-9/11 world, looking up, looking away, and hoping the problem would go away is no longer the answer.

That is why we are having this important debate here on the floor today. The American public deserves to hear how their elected leaders will respond to international terrorism and those enemies who seek to destroy our American way of life.

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Will we fight or will we retreat? That is the question that is posed to us. Some of my friends on the other side of the aisle often refer to Iraq as a distraction.

They have called Operation Iraqi Freedom a war of choice that isn't part of the real war on terror. Someone should tell that to al Qaeda. Let's be clear here. Those who say this is a war of choice are nothing more than wrong. This is a war of necessity that we must fight.

But you don't have to believe me. Just listen to al Qaeda's own leader,

their number two leader. Ayman al Zawahiri knows how important the future of Iraq is to his cause. In a 6,000-word letter to al Qaeda's then commander in Iraq, the recently eliminated Zarqawi, he made clear that the terrorists view Iraq as a central battlefield in the global war on terror.

For some reason, this brazen declaration from one of our nemesis about Iraq's importance hasn't registered with many opponents of the war who insist on conceding defeat and withdrawing. If the terrorists tell us directly they see Iraq as a central front on their violent ambitions across the globe, should we dismiss it? Should we dismiss their claims and simply wait for them to attack America?

Operation Iraqi Freedom was hardly a war of choice. Saddam was already a menace and a threat to international order when he ordered several divisions of the Iraqi army into Kuwait in 1990. He routinely supported and openly encouraged acts of terrorism. He relentlessly persecuted and tortured his own civilian population, including Shias, Sunnis, Kurds and others. He engaged in a multi-billion dollar scandal involving a number of our allies aimed at thwarting the sanctions that were put in place after the gulf war, and abusing the Oil-for-Food Program, thus causing even greater harm to his own people.

He refused to disclose and foreswear his maniacal pursuit of weapons of mass destruction, and he ignored international sanctions and resolutions passed by the United Nations Security Council. Saddam made the case for his ouster better than anyone else could.

President Bush said, on the eve of the American-led invasion, that we would meet the threat before it became imminent, so that we would not have to meet it later with armies of firefighters, police, doctors and others on the streets of our own cities.

September 11 made it clear that we could no longer afford to ignore madmen who threaten our peace and stability. We can no longer let rogue regimes go unchecked and unchallenged.

And because of the combination of modern technology and a murderous ideology, we can no longer count on vast oceans or our own military supremacy to keep America safe. The enemy we must confront does not accept political negotiations or coexistence. The aims of our enemies are clear, to destroy anyone who stands for values, beliefs or political systems which are contrary to their warped and repressive ideology.

Their aims are to destroy the cause of freedom and democracy itself. That is why retreat is not an option in Iraq. As part of the global war on terror, the stakes for the American people are too great. The action we took in Iraq was in the best interests of the American people and the world community.

The events of 9/11 demonstrated that we had to show our own resolve as the world's premier defender of freedom and liberty before such ideals were

preyed upon rather than after standing witness to their demise at the hands of our enemies.

Some of my friends on the other side have called the war in Iraq a failed effort. This is curious, given the constant drumbeat of progress since the toppling of the Hussein regime. More children are going to school now in Iraq than at any point in their country's history. The Iraqis have held successful elections, drafted and ratified a national constitution, and have put together the first sovereign, free and unified government in Iraq's history.

Just in the past week we have seen several positive developments in Iraq and the global war on terror. The U.S. military forces eliminated the terrorist al Zarqawi, al Qaeda's top commander in Iraq, and a cold-blooded killer.

The Iraqi Government named new Interior, Defense and Security Ministers as part of their new government's continued progress. And President Bush traveled to Baghdad to meet the newly appointed Prime Minister, Mr. Maliki, to discuss our growing partnership with our new democratic ally.

Yes, there have been some setbacks. No war is easy, but an honest account of our effort must acknowledge the staying power of the insurgency and the support it has received from foreign forces. But the effort and savagery of these insurgents and their sponsors only underscores our progress and the importance of this effort in the global war on terror.

If we had adopted the irrational policies of those who lack commitment to winning this fight, the terrorist, al Zarqawi, would still be alive and plotting attacks against Iraqis and Americans.

Defeating repressive, radical terrorists and their allies is our defining task of the 21st century. Crushing their deadly and poisonous ideology, freeing from tyranny the millions threatened with its bondage, is an effort which the United States and her allies are uniquely suited.

We are the primary target of radical terrorists, and the leader of nations with the capability and fortitude to wage a prolonged fight against these people. In my view, we must not shy away, if only so our children and their children may live in peace.

The American people are understandably concerned about our mission in a post-Saddam Iraq. There have been many tough days since Iraq's liberation and transition to a sovereign democracy. Advancing freedom and building democracies in a part of the world that has known nothing but tyranny is a difficult task. But achieving victory there and gaining a democratic ally in the region will be the best gift of security we can give to future generations of Americans and Iraqi people who have longed to rid themselves of tyranny and oppression.

The world scoffed at Ronald Reagan when he said, tear down this wall. They said communism could never be re-

placed by freedom. Mr. Speaker, Mr. Reagan was right. And the editorial writers and many in Congress back then were wrong. It is that same faith in humanity, that same faith in freedom that compels us to win in Iraq and to win the global war on terror. Freedom wins. And we will win, because Ronald Reagan noted at the Brandenburg Gate, freedom trumps those ancient hatreds. The freedom to raise your family, the freedom to walk your kids to school, the freedom to live in peace. As Ronald Reagan said, it is always freedom that is the victor.

President John Kennedy said once so eloquently, the cost of freedom is always high, but Americans have always paid it. And one path we shall never choose, and that is the path of surrender or submission.

This week's debate has given all of us an opportunity to answer a fundamental question, are we going to confront the threat of terrorism and defeat it, or will we relent and retreat in the hope that it just goes away?

Achieving victory is our only option. And for the sake of the American people and our kids and theirs, we have no choice but to confront these terrorists, win the war on terror, and spread freedom and democracy around the world.

Mr. NEAL of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, the war in Iraq reached another troubling milestone yesterday with the announcement that 2,500 American soldiers have now been killed in the 3-year conflict. In Massachusetts alone, more than 35 families have mourned the loss of a loved one, killed in action in places like Ramadi, Fallujah and Najaf. And since President Bush declared an end to "major combat operations," more than 17,000 troops have been wounded in combat.

Every Member of Congress supports the heroic efforts of our troops in Iraq, Afghanistan and around the globe. These brave men and women in uniform, and their service to our country, should never be forgotten. We have the finest armed forces in the world and they represent the United States of America with remarkable courage, honor and dignity.

During a recent memorial service for a young soldier from western Massachusetts who was killed in Iraq, a Marine Commander paid tribute to our fallen service members by saying: "we weep at their passing, honor their service and cherish their memories." I would simply add that we are also grateful for the enormous sacrifice they have made for our nation.

We are here today in this historic chamber to discuss the future of a war that has already taken so much from so many. A war that a majority Americans now disapprove of.

In October 2002, when this institution first debated authorizing the use of military force, I raised a number of concerns about a pre-emptive war with Iraq including its cost, the lack of connection between Saddam Hussein and 9/11, and the fact that Iraq was not a credible threat to the United States. I also believed that a pre-emptive strike would act as an effective recruiting tool for radical Islamic fundamentalism worldwide. For these reasons, I was 1 of 133 House Members who against the Iraq war resolution.

Unfortunately, as I stand on the floor of the House, nearly 4 years later, many of these

concerns still exist. According to the non-partisan Congressional Research Service (CRS), the war in Iraq has now cost the U.S. taxpayer roughly \$319 billion to date. That's \$6.4 billion a month and more than \$100,000 per minute. If you live in Massachusetts, \$9 billion of your money has been spent in Iraq. And there is no end in sight.

I would point out to my colleagues that former White House economic adviser Lawrence Lindsey lost his job for predicting that the war would cost a mere \$200 billion. From the start, the Bush administration has not been straight with the American people about the cost of the war in Iraq. And this partisan resolution does nothing to address that.

In fact, the White House has not been straight about most aspects of the war from the existence of weapons of mass destruction to the threat of the insurgency, and from Iraq's purchase of yellow cake uranium to Saddam's ties to al-Qaeda. And with this resolution, House Republicans will simply rubberstamp President Bush's poor planning and mismanagement. I believe it is time for a new direction in Iraq.

More importantly, so do many military leaders. Marine Corps General Anthony Zinni, Army Major General Charles Swannack, Army General John Batiste, Marine Corps Lieutenant General Gregory Newbold and others have all expressed real concerns about our future in Iraq. These are individuals who were deeply involved in the planning and execution of the war. And they do not like what they see.

As General Zinni recently said, "we are paying the price for the lack of credible plan. Ten years worth of planning were thrown away, troop levels dismissed out of hand. . . . These were strategic mistakes, mistakes of policy made back here."

Mr. Speaker, like most Americans, I believe it is time for a new course in Iraq. I believe we need to develop an honorable exit strategy. I will vote against this resolution to give President Bush an open-ended commitment in Iraq. Let's bring the troops back home.

Ms. SCHWARTZ of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I have great respect for my colleagues here in the U.S. House of Representatives. I respect them for their service and for their dedication to their constituents. However, Mr. Speaker, I take offense that any member of this House would stand here and challenge the patriotism of a colleague—such a charge is unworthy of this institution and the democracy we fight for every day. I refuse to allow anyone on the other side, as they have done today and have since this war in Iraq began, to question—whether directly or indirectly—my love of our country, my unwavering commitment to our troops, and my firm belief that we must do whatever necessary to defend the citizens of the United States.

Mr. Speaker, I will oppose the resolution before us today. And, I do so because I love this country and who we are and what we stand for. My reason for opposing this particular resolution comes down to one word—accountability. At every level, the Republican majority here in Congress, has failed to hold this Administration accountable. It is simply astonishing that most of my Republican colleagues have time and time again simply bent to the will of the Administration and allowed themselves to believe meaningless rhetoric without asking tough questions. I urge my colleagues on the other side to abandon their blind faith

in this Administration's rhetoric and instead demand accountability. For it is through information, recognition of errors, and the development of an honest plan that we will ultimately ensure our success in Iraq.

Misjudgments and miscalculations have led to a conflict that continues three years after the President declared "mission accomplished." History will judge the President and his cabinet for their performance. But, it is our responsibility as members of Congress to call for a clear plan going forward. It is past time that this Administration implement a strategy to meet our mission and bring our troops home, and it is past time that this Congress demand it.

Instead, this resolution supports a "stay the course" policy that has failed our troops and failed our nation. We all want to see a safe and democratic Iraq. However, the President's open-ended declaration to stay as long as it takes—a policy that this resolution defends—will not require the Iraqi government and the Iraqi people to make the tough choices that need to be made. That is why we must make clear that our military presence is contingent upon progress in the formation of a stable and functioning Iraqi government. We have to make it clear that we expect the Iraqis to take responsibility for their government and for their security. We will support them, but the time for a serious U.S. military presence is limited. To make that clear, we should begin to bring our Reservists and National Guard home, and put in place a strategy to bring the rest of our young men and women out of Iraq as soon as possible.

My colleagues, today, we could have had the opportunity to discuss these important policy issues, demand answers, and work together to better define our objectives in Iraq and our strategy for completing our mission. Instead, we are once again stuck in neutral—playing politics with resolutions about whether Republicans or Democrats support the troops and whether Republicans or Democrats are stronger against terrorism. Let's be clear: we all support the troops and we are all committed to fighting terrorism. That is not the issue—the issue is the Bush Administration's failed policy in Iraq and how Congress—as a separate and independent branch of government—should demand accountability for their failures and demand a real strategy to achieve success and bring our troops home. We owe this to our constituents. We owe it to the brave Americans serving this country overseas. And, we owe it to our great country and its legacy.

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Speaker, I thank you for this opportunity to offer supplemental remarks to the remarks I entered into the RECORD yesterday. I offer these supplemental remarks as a continuation of my thoughts relative to the debate held yesterday, Thursday, June 15 and continuing into this morning, Friday, June 16.

It is clear, Mr. Speaker, to anyone who reads the 730 words contained within the body of H. Res. 861 that this resolution concerns three principal objectives: (1) general support for American troops, (2) the Congress's stated belief that the United States will win the war on terror, and (3) the encouragement of the new permanent unity government in Iraq and Prime Minister Nuri Al-Maliki to succeed, toward the ultimate goal of stabilizing Iraq and returning American troops back to the United States. Like so many of my colleagues, I wish this resolution said much more: I wish that the

Rules Committee had allowed amendments to this legislation; I wish that a Democratic substitute had been allowed. But none of those things occurred.

Try as they might, the spin doctors and the pundits on the other side of the aisle are trying to make this vote something which it is not—a vote indicating support for the war in Iraq. It is most certainly not that, but is instead a political football that this Majority sees no problem kicking around.

I was not a member of Congress when initial authorization was given to this President to enter into this conflict; I neither support this war nor President Bush's handling—or, rather, his mishandling, of it. This mismanagement has been evident practically from the conflict's inception.

The very simple fact is that the vote today on H. Res. 861 and the surrounding circumstances, are highly political, and not substantive in nature. All those voting on this measure today know and understand that this is a vote scheduled by the Republican majority in Congress only to put Democrats into what Republicans perceive is a potentially difficult political spot. While I did not take a vote to authorize this war, it is my responsibility to work with my colleagues to deal with its aftermath—something that is far more difficult. And I take that responsibility very seriously.

American troops are in Iraq right now. In my view, the establishment of an arbitrary deadline for a pullout—whether it is tomorrow, a month or a year from now—is irresponsible. Our military intervention has destabilized Iraq; as a result, this Nation maintains a duty to stabilize the situation before turning full control back over to the Iraqis. We must leave Iraq as soon as possible, but we must do so responsibly.

Unfortunately, H. Res. 861 does nothing toward ending the instability. It is emotive. It inflames passions. It is red-meat election year politics at its worst.

As I have said throughout my time in Congress, Iraq will be, in the end, what Iraqis themselves will make of it. Congress and the administration need to press forward and convert the well-intentioned but arbitrary deadlines for withdrawal of our troops into responsible, tangible plans that will serve to bring our troops home. We need to shunt aside the inflamed politics of the day—the politics that leads the House to take a day and a half to consider a resolution that accomplishes nothing—and begin a serious discussion about a responsible date for withdrawal of American troops from Iraq—a plan that builds upon the small but substantial positive steps we have seen in Iraq, such as the approval of a constitutional government, the holding of free elections and the institution of a democratic government under the leadership of Prime Minister Al-Maliki.

It is sad that June 15 to June 16, 2006, will be known more for slogans and empty election-year rhetoric than for a realistic solution to a difficult problem. Sadder still is the majority's steadfast commitment to inflaming the passions of the American populace for political gain. I supported H. Res. 861 today, but I eagerly look forward to a day when the majority overcomes its singular focus on politics and commences a serious discussion about how to responsibly bring conclusion to our role in Iraq. I look forward to the day when we can set aside the rhetoric and meaningless non-

binding resolutions and focus on a responsible and workable solution to the morass that the President and this administration have created half a world away.

Ms. MILLENDER-McDONALD. Mr. Speaker, I am deeply disappointed in the Republican Congress' unwillingness to focus on the truth in Iraq. Calling today's spectacle a true debate of ideas on Iraq does not pass the "straight face test." If House Republican leadership choose to have a real debate on Iraq, Members of the House should be able to offer alternatives and ideas. Instead, they have blocked all alternatives by Democrats and for 10 hours the American people are left with the same empty rhetoric they have been hearing from the House Republicans on the floor for 3 years.

My constituents in the 37th District want a strategy in Iraq. They want to know when our brave young soldiers will return home to their families safely. Given this, I find it disingenuous for Republican leadership to talk tough about the war on terror when this debate is supposed to be about American troops in Iraq. It was the Republican leadership who could not wait to divert resources from the war on terror to chase after Saddam Hussein in the first place. Many Democrats said this was a dangerous path, and sadly, that is exactly where we find ourselves.

Mr. Speaker, I support withdrawing our troops at a specific time and redeploying them to the periphery of the arena. Redeploying our troops is the natural and timely evolution to our mission in Iraq. But now is the time that we need to start the process and planning of bringing our troops home. Our troops have contributed to the building of a democracy, assisted in training an Iraqi police and military force and overseen three elections as well as the drafting of a national constitution. They have accomplished a great deal. And we have supported them throughout.

I join the American people in their deep patriotism and love for our great land, and I join them in their solemn appreciation for the thousands of American families who have sacrificed a son or daughter.

However, our troops have been in Iraq for over 3 years. We knew that when we entered this conflict that our troops were not going to be a permanent fixture in Iraq. This was the understanding Congress had with the administration and the American people. The men and women who have given their lives in liberating Iraq have completed their mission and they have done so with valor.

Now it is time for the Iraqi people to rebuild their communities and it is time for us to make our communities whole again by bringing our troops home.

The resolution today is not what the Republican leadership had notified us of. I can only hope that the next Iraq debate on House floor takes place both soon and with greater substance.

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, although I am in opposition to the resolution, I strongly support our men and women in uniform who are fighting to protect our freedom. These brave men and women have made, and continue to make, the ultimate sacrifice on behalf of our great country. Approximately 2,500 soldiers have given their lives for our country in this war. Approximately 2,500 families across America have been left devastated by the loss of a loved one. Mothers and fathers have lost their cherished sons and

daughters, men and women have lost their spouses, children have lost parents. Their sacrifices will forever be remembered.

Our Government has spent more than \$250 billion on the war in Iraq, and that number is increasing at the rate of \$177 million per day. However, just as we cannot put a dollar figure on the cost of lives and limbs our brave soldiers have lost, we also cannot put a dollar figure on the amount of pride that we as citizens have for them. While our soldiers fight and persevere because they, more than anyone, realize what is at stake in Iraq, it is my sincere hope that we can bring them home soon and reunite them with their loved ones.

Mr. Speaker, although I am in opposition to this resolution, today, tomorrow, and as long as our precious Republic shall exist, we should continue to honor our men and women for their sacrifice, devotion, and continued defense of our country.

God bless America and thank God for the sacrifices made by our brave men and women in uniform.

Mr. PEARCE. Mr. Speaker, all of history—and indeed, all of life—is a series of choices. International relations—and our national security—are mostly about choices.

The world chose to watch when Hitler published his blueprint for genocide in *Mein Kampf*. The world also chose to watch as Hitler took power on January 30, 1933; directing the boycott of Jewish businesses and opening the first concentration camp just 6 weeks later.

The world continued to stand by and watch as Hitler breached the Treaty of Versailles while denying Jews their fundamental rights through the Nuremberg Race Laws.

Then, on September 30, 1938, British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain hailed “peace for our time” after appeasing Hitler in Munich.

Thirty-four years later, a terrorist massacre at the 1972 Munich Olympics launched a new era of appeasement. The world met the terrorists’ murderous ambitions with an invitation to the negotiating table. Within weeks of the Munich Massacre, the German government let three jailed terrorists go to secure the release of a hijacked Lufthansa jet.

When terrorism first came to American soil with the 1993 World Trade Center bombing, our government treated it as a police matter rather than what it was: an act of war. Then came the Khobar Towers bombing in 1996 and the U.S.S. *Cole* attack in 2000. America—and the world—chose to stand by and watch.

9/11 was the most visible manifestation of a war that had been raging between the terrorists and civil societies around the world for decades. But even as the terrorists plotted to kill us, we had refused to engage them until President Bush committed America to fighting the global War on Terror.

The global War on Terror isn’t just a struggle against al Qaeda. It’s a war against a violent, evil ideology with which we can never compromise or achieve an armistice. We can’t walk away from the fight and hope our enemy goes away.

Any withdrawal—any retreat—in Iraq or elsewhere will be met with more attacks, more bloodshed. Except that the blood could once again run in our streets, in our neighborhoods.

We will learn history’s painful lessons at last? That’s the choice this resolution poses today.

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to H. Res. 861. The resolution declares that

“the United States is committed to the completion of the mission to create a sovereign, free, secure and united Iraq.” That’s a big job. Ask the British, who tried and failed to do this in the 20th century, what a big job it is. While President Bush has said repeatedly that when the Iraqis stand up we will stand down, this resolution asserts that our troops will remain in Iraq indefinitely. That is unfortunate.

A group of Republicans and Democrats tried to offer a more concrete and meaningful alternative to this resolution, which would have substituted the essence of H.J. Res. 55 for H. Res. 861. This is in line with every benchmark set by President Bush. Unfortunately, we were not allowed to offer an amendment.

Our approach is so reasonable that I believe 75 percent of the American public would strongly support it. Our amendment would simply require the President to develop and implement a plan for the withdrawal of U.S. Armed Forces from Iraq in a reasonable time frame. It does not give a specific date to complete a withdrawal. It does not say to be out in 30 days or else. It just says try to define an end point for the benefit of everybody. This is exactly in line with what the President himself has stated; it supports his statements.

We are not taking a radical approach. It is a very modest approach, a very mild approach. The reason that there was not a vote on our amendment is that we would have won. So this entire exercise is designed for politics. And men are dying. Women are dying! And we’re going broke—we spend \$300 million every single day in Iraq, at the same time programs here at home are being denied. So we’re going to have a financial crisis, and we’ll have a political crisis.

I would like to see this effort taken out of the political realm and put it into the realm of policy discussions. We need to look for real solutions rather than just making political statements.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to reiterate that now is not the time to bring our troops home from Iraq. Our soldiers have done a valiant effort in fighting terrorism and bringing a semblance of law and order to the chaos in the region and it would be short-sighted to lay out a specific timetable to bring U.S. troops home prematurely before their mission is accomplished. Over the last 12 months, enormous progress has been made in training Iraqi security forces and already we are seeing the fruits of our labors. Iraqi forces took the lead in election security and maintaining order during the December elections. In Southern Iraq control of the countryside is already in the process of being transferred from Japanese and Australian peacekeepers to Iraqi security forces. Slowly but surely this approach of having Iraqi forces take the lead in patrolling the streets of their cities while the U.S. military moves their troops to the perimeter is taking hold. As Iraqi forces continue to stand up, American forces will stand down. Congress needs to ensure that by our actions we don’t send a message to our Iraqi allies that the United States is lessening its resolve and going back on our commitment to achieve our strategy for victory in Iraq and defeat the terrorist insurgents who are threatening this victory. While the United States will continue to face setbacks as we move forward with our mission to transfer authority over to the Iraqi people, we have to be firm in maintaining our resolve and finish what we started by achieving a lasting peace in Iraq.

Everyone agrees that our ultimate goal is to establish a free, open and democratic Iraqi government and bring our men and women in uniform home as soon as possible. Nevertheless, we have a responsibility to our troops to ensure that terrorism does not prevail in the Middle East. Any Congressional agreement of an arbitrary time table to bring our troops home before we have accomplished our mission is unacceptable and could potentially increase the risk to our soldiers. I have confidence in our military leadership and in our troops that we will ultimately prevail in our war on terror. I look forward to the day when we can transfer U.S. authority over to Iraq’s elected leaders and to a completed transition of power and governance of Iraq.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to H. Res. 861. Republicans aren’t interested in debating or discussing the merits or conduct of the War in Iraq; they only want to play politics with it.

Republicans wrote this resolution. Democrats were not consulted or allowed any input. Republicans then rigged the process and outlawed any amendments, so that the only real choice in voting was not yea or nay, but take it or leave it.

There are serious issues we have to discuss that are being ignored.

The war in Iraq has cost our country \$320 billion so far—money we have had to borrow—and it will no doubt cost hundreds of billions more. It has cost the lives of 2,500 American service men and women and more than 18,300 have been wounded. The needs of our veterans are being shortchanged. Some of our troops are on their fourth deployment since 2001. Our military readiness is affected because we are wearing out both our equipment and our troops. And House Republicans are still pretending that the war against terror somehow has to be fought in the same basic way we fought in Korea and Vietnam.

The American people deserve better than a sham resolution and a staged debate.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to House Resolution 861.

As Americans of good conscience, we can find some comfort in the fact that Saddam Hussein is on trial for his crimes and that the Iraqi people have formed a representative government.

Yet, as we, the elected Representatives of the American people, engage in this discussion more than 3 years after President Bush declared “mission accomplished”: 2,500 brave young Americans have died, over 18,300 have been injured, and more than 10,000 Iraqis have suffered a similar fate.

Our national treasury continues to be squandered—to date by over \$300 billion, with over \$9 billion of reconstruction funds squandered with no accounting.

And no believable argument has been advanced that our continued military presence in Iraq will make the American people more secure against the very real threats that we face in the Global War on Terror.

Tragically, this House is now debating a non-binding resolution that is as short-sighted and devoid of direction as the President’s policy in Iraq, that purposely confuses the Global War on Terror with the war in Iraq. And despite the crafty and artful wording of the resolution—these two efforts are not synonymous. There is no connection between 9/11 and Saddam Hussein nor Saddam Hussein and Osama Bin Laden.

The President has admitted this, yet the Republican Party in the House continues to support his failed policies in Iraq under the guise of fighting terror—consistently providing billions of off-budget funding, allowing waste, fraud and abuse to go unchecked and failing to exercise even the semblance of oversight.

Upon close reading, the Resolution contains three different kinds of declarations.

Some are irrelevant—because everyone believes them to be true.

Some are cynical—because they contain assertions that no one can reasonably believe.

And some are illusory—because they assert objectives that, based upon the “facts on the ground in Iraq” we cannot reasonably expect to achieve in the foreseeable future.

The American people and especially the American troops deserve better than this. We all have unwavering pride for our troops—they are performing superbly. The quagmire that Iraq has become is not the fault of the troops—it is the failure of the President to plan for a transition to the peace.

As a member of the Out-of-Iraq Caucus, I have co-sponsored and continue to support Representative MURTHA's solution, House Joint Resolution 73.

It makes it clear to the Iraqi people that our Nation renounces any claim to permanent bases in their country.

It declares that we will bring our troops home at the earliest practicable date.

And it provides a plan for peace.

Saddam Hussein is no longer the ruler of Iraq.

A reasonably democratic constitution has been ratified.

A democratic government has been elected.

Now, the Iraqi people must forge their own future. Forging their own future is what 80 percent of Iraqis want—allowing them to do so would represent true freedom and democracy for Iraqis.

Now, this Congress is duty-bound to heed the reasoned assessments of American military commanders that we make both Iraqi and American soil less secure by our continued military presence there. In fact, sadly, our continued occupation has in fact increased the number of terrorist operatives in Iraq. Mr. Speaker, with this result it is time to rethink our “help” to the Iraqi people.

The Iraqi people should continue to receive our continued assistance as they rebuild their country, without our military occupation.

We should help them defend their borders against terrorist infiltration—if the need arises.

But, it is time for a change. Let's stop the carnage.

It is time to bring our troops home.

Mr. RUSH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to show support for the Out of Iraq Caucus and to add my voice to this much needed debate on the war in Iraq.

Mr. Speaker, I voted against this war because I thought it was a mistake from the beginning. Iraq was not an imminent threat to our security, there were no weapons of mass destruction, and it has never been a part of American foreign policy to preemptively invade another country in order to spread our will on their citizens.

But Mr. Speaker we are in Iraq now, the President has committed our troops there and we now have an obligation to fix the mess that we've made over there.

But how long do we stay the course when the course that we have been on has not

been a successful one. How long do we keep our troops in a country where they are not treated as liberators, but are instead fueling the violence there just by their mere presence?

The American people are starting to realize that this war was a mistake. The reason for going to war was wrong, the planning for keeping the peace after the war was nonexistent, and there does not seem to be any clear indication of what victory in Iraq looks like.

This was a war of choice and the people of Iraq are very suspicious about our motives for being there. Many people in and out of Iraq believed America's motivation for invading Iraq had more to do with its oil fields and strategic location in the Middle East, than with its supposed weapons of mass destruction.

The American public also overwhelmingly believes this war was not worth the human or financial burden, and how can we blame them?

At a time when our education system needs vast improvement, our schools are deteriorating, and our children are losing their edge in the fields of math, science, and engineering, we are sending billions of taxpayer's dollars overseas on a weekly basis.

While we have sent close to a half a trillion dollars over to Iraq, here at home many Americans still do not have the basic necessities they need to live whole, fruitful lives.

Millions of our citizens do not have healthcare, and millions more are working overtime just to make ends meet. Sadly, many Americans are not feeling the great economic boom that the Administration is trying so desperately to tout.

Constituents in my districts are feeling the pinch in their pockets due to skyrocketing fuel costs, an overpriced housing market, and debt that will follow them to their graves.

My constituents are starting to wonder, how can we continue to justify sending billions of dollars out of the country when they need better services and resources here at home?

How can we continue to ask our men and women in uniform to give their lives for a cause that was built on deceptions and misinformation?

Our national deficit is fast approaching \$8 trillion, I repeat \$8 trillion, and yet Congress is more concerned with enacting tax cuts for the wealthy, while simultaneously spending billions in Iraq.

Mr. Speaker, something has to give. We cannot continue on this path that we are currently on. The resources of this country, as great as they are, are being stretched too thin.

Our forces, as mighty as they are, are being stretched too thin for the long-term health of the country.

Mr. Speaker, for the sake of this great Nation, we need to set a new course. We need a new policy on Iraq and Congress needs to start focusing its attention on the problems facing our citizens here at home.

I urge all of my colleagues to support the Murtha Resolution, which establishes a time line for a responsible troop redeployment and allows Iraqis to stand up and take responsibility for the course of their own nation.

As long as we are there doing the job that Iraqis should be doing for themselves we cannot expect them to stand up and take control of their own country.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, GEN Anthony Zinni and other retired generals have been

outspoken in their opposition to the planning and execution of our occupation of Iraq. The administration rejected their sound recommendations, which predicted exactly what would happen if we didn't plan for the occupation.

These generals explain that our forces were not provided enough resources to do the job, that we alienated allies that could have helped in rebuilding Iraq, and that the Defense Department ignored planning for the post-war occupation, unaware of the growing insurgency.

I have heard from too many military families whose children have been wounded or killed in duty. Their grief is so much harder to bear knowing that we did not adequately equip their sons and daughters in battle.

I have met many times with Lila Lipscomb, a proud mother from Flint, Michigan, who lost her son Michael in Iraq. Initially, Lila supported the war on the assumption that the government knew best. A week after finding out her son had died, Lila received a letter from her son in which he forcefully argued that we should not be in Iraq because there was no connection between Iraq and Osama bin Laden.

Cindy Sheehan lost her son Casey in Iraq and became a voice for mothers of soldiers who oppose the war. Cindy's loss motivated her to unite with other grieving mothers in opposition to the war. Her willingness to speak truth to power has drawn attention to the misconduct of the war and the terrible price that servicemen and women and their families have paid.

We have endured strategic missteps and now find ourselves with insufficient troop levels to provide adequate safety in Iraq. Insurgent bombings, ethnic battles, and mass abductions by rival Sunni and Shiite militias are clear indications that our occupation has not provided for the conditions that Iraqis need to form an effectively functioning government.

United States reconstruction and infrastructure investment has had little impact in 3 years. Despite the billions of noncompetitive, cost-plus contracts given to businesses friendly to this administration, 54 percent of Iraqi households still lack access to clean water and 85 percent lack reliable electricity.

The administration's emphasis on unilateral action in this conflict has left America bearing too much of a military and financial burden. If Iraq is going to be stabilized and move toward a democracy, it will need a commitment and a will far greater than what America itself can provide on its own.

Why haven't we learned from the first gulf war? In the 1991 gulf war, our coalition partners shouldered over 75 percent of the cost of the war. We had over 100,000 Muslim troops fighting alongside a broad coalition of forces.

We need to encourage our friends and allies around the globe to help with Iraqi reconstruction and peacekeeping. We just don't have sufficient resources to manage this work on our own.

If we can bring the international community into Iraq to help establish a democracy, protect its citizens, and rebuild its infrastructure, it will free American forces and resources to the real problem we face: terrorism.

Let's heed the advice of our colleague JOHN MURTHA and redeploy our troops to find Osama bin Laden and fight terrorists. If we can shatter the myth that occupying Iraq is the same thing as fighting terrorism, then these 10

hours of debate will have been worth something after all.

Mr. MOORE of Kansas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to share my comments and concerns regarding H. Res. 861. While this resolution is purely symbolic and does not have the force of law, I am voting for it, as I agree with the majority of the sentiments it expresses. In 2003, I voted for the use of force resolution, based upon what we later learned was flawed intelligence about the existence of weapons of mass destruction in Iraq. While I am glad that Saddam Hussein was removed from power and has been captured, and I hope that the new Iraqi government is successful, the U.S. must move toward a new policy in Iraq.

As I stated in a letter to President Bush last month, the time has come for the United States to give the Iraqis strong incentive to stand on their own feet and take control of their own affairs. I acknowledge this will be a challenge, as there is a persistent and strong insurgency, which continues to kill Iraqis every day. Therefore, they must speed up the process of training Iraqi security forces that are willing and capable of defending their country. There are many former members of the Iraqi Army who are still unemployed. The United States and the administration need to send a clear message to the Iraqis that we will not have a permanent military presence in Iraq. Taking this step will motivate Iraqis to take charge of their own affairs and create incentives for involvement from regional players and the international community.

Additionally, we need to begin private discussions with the leaders in Iraq regarding a timeframe for redeployment of our troops. To date, more than 2,500 U.S. soldiers have been killed and 19,000 wounded in Iraq. Extended and multiple deployments have eroded U.S. ground forces and overall military strength. A Pentagon-commissioned study recently concluded that the Army cannot maintain its current pace of operations in Iraq without doing permanent damage to the quality of the force. More than three years of continuous deployment of U.S. troops in Iraq has contributed to serious problems with military recruitment, forcing the Army to lower the standards for recruits, led to military equipment shortages that hamper the ability of ground forces to do their jobs in Iraq, and undermine the ability of the U.S. National Guard to deal with problems at home.

While I agree with concerns that publicly announcing a timetable for withdrawal would put our troops at risk, I'm concerned that political parties and new governments are very much like some people. If you undertake to do something for a person, some individuals will stand back and let you continue—and never step up to the plate to do for themselves.

We have saved the Iraqi people from Sadaam Hussein, but we cannot save the Iraqi people from the Iraqi people—if they are not able and willing to fashion a political solution and bring the Iraqi people together. We must encourage the new Iraqi government and give them strong incentive to assume responsibility and stand on their own.

Our fighting men and women have served bravely. We must commit ourselves to an outcome in Iraq that honors their sacrifices.

Mr. ROTHMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to the resolution, which inaccurately describes the war in Iraq as part of the Global War on Terror. While I strongly and proudly

support our courageous and dedicated troops, coalition partners, and the Iraqi Security Forces who put their lives on the line each and every day to fight for a democratic, stable and secure Iraq, I cannot support a resolution that does not paint an accurate picture of what the true situation on the ground is in Iraq.

It is imperative that we acknowledge these realities: since we invaded Iraq in March 2003, more than 2,500 American service men and women have been killed in Iraq; 18,000 have been wounded. More than 100,000 innocent Iraqi civilians have lost their lives. Nearly \$350 billion of U.S. taxpayer dollars have been spent. Terrorist leader al-Zarqawi has been killed and Saddam Hussein is in prison, but the pacification and reconstruction of Iraq have been a failure. Every single fact that the President has offered to justify both the invasion of and the sustained U.S. military presence in Iraq has proven to be wrong. The President said that the war would be short-lived, aided by our allies, paid for by Iraqi oil, welcomed by the Iraqi people, and would result in a reconstructed Iraq with an improved quality of life for its citizens. His strategy in Iraq is not working and, as we have seen so many times, he and his administration are incapable of admitting mistakes—even when those mistakes are irrefutable.

This war has exhausted our military, hurt our war on terrorism, damaged our country's credibility internationally, and strained our economy. I strongly believe that the President's current "stay the course" plan in Iraq is not working. We need a new strategy. We need to take our troops out of Iraq.

I strongly disagree with the assertion in this resolution that our continuing presence in Iraq is a vital part of fighting our war on terrorism. After all, the attacks on our troops in Iraq are not coming primarily from al-Qaeda. There are only approximately 1,000 al-Qaeda amidst the 26 million people of Iraq. The attacks on U.S. troops are planned by an insurgency that is comprised of native Iraqis. Once the American soldiers leave, we will remove the stimulus for the local Iraqi and worldwide incitement against America as an "occupier." We can continue to assist the Iraqi people in strengthening their fledgling democracy, but we must remove the provocation of an American military presence and instead, reinvest our resources in strengthening U.S. border and port security, defeating al-Qaeda in Afghanistan and elsewhere, and rebuilding our much-depleted U.S. military.

For this reason, I urge my colleagues to oppose the resolution and instead, support a new plan in Iraq that will bring our troops home.

Mr. SHAW. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of House Resolution 861, a resolution declaring that the United States will prevail in the Global War on Terror, the struggle to protect freedom from terrorist adversaries.

This is a critical time in American and world history. Only 5 years have passed since the al Qaeda network attacked us on our homeland. Over 3,000 people died on September 11, 2001, and the world as we knew it changed instantly.

Our principal terrorist enemies seek to establish regimes that rule according to a violent and intolerant distortion of Islam. As illustrated by Taliban-rules Afghanistan, such regimes would deny all political and religious freedoms and serve as sanctuaries for violent extremists

to launch additional attacks—not only against the United States and its partners but the Muslim world itself.

The enemy uses suicide bombings, beheadings, and other atrocities against innocents as a means to achieve their dark vision. Their demonstrated indifference to human life and desire to inflict catastrophic damage on the United States and its partners around the world has fueled their pursuit of and intent to use WMD.

We cannot permit the world's most dangerous terrorists and their regime sponsors to threaten us with the world's most destructive weapons.

Our national strategy is to stop terrorist attacks against the United States, our citizens, our interests, and our friends and allies around the world.

We have and continue to defeat terrorists by attacking their established infrastructure, such as safe havens, management, power, and infrastructure. This disruption will naturally force the terrorists to disperse and decentralize, thereby removing their global influence.

We have and continue to deny terrorists support. Separating terrorists from their sponsors and support will deny availability of critical assets needed to plan, train for, and conduct operations. Denying sanctuary will prevent the terrorists from having the opportunity to reorganize and reestablish a global threat. A terrorist that is constantly on the move to survive does not have time to plan or conduct major operations.

We have and continue to work with the international community to diminish the underlying conditions that terrorists seek to exploit. It is in our best interest to continue focusing on resources and efforts towards at-risk regions to prevent the emergence or the re-emergence of terrorists.

The United States Government, through our dedicated public servants, courageous men and women in uniform, and attentive intelligence officers are protecting the United States, our citizens, and our national interests at home and abroad—24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year.

Today, American values, liberty, and lives are still at stake. While we engage the enemy on foreign soil, we are also simultaneously establishing homeland defenses, and extending such defenses to identify and neutralize any emerging threats as early as possible.

The American public is one of the world's most informed societies—the American people understand that the threat against our Nation and values are real and imminent.

And to mischaracterize the American people's support for the global war and the men and women in uniform fighting at the front lines of this war is unpatriotic and disingenuous. U.S. forces will withdraw from Iraq as soon as the mission is successfully accomplished. Success will be achieved when there is a free Iraq in which Iraqis themselves are sponsors of their own liberty and security. The criteria for withdrawing Coalition forces from Iraq are conditions based, not calendar based.

For America will remain the land of the free, home of the brave as long as Americans are willing to fight for the principles of freedom and democracy.

I urge my colleagues to support H. Res. 861.

Mr. CLEAVER. Mr. Speaker, I would like to associate myself with the comments of the

ranking member of the Committee on Armed Services, Mr. IKE SKELTON. Had I not been called away to perform a funeral, I, like him, would have voted against this resolution, or, may have even walked out to protest this mockery in the People's House.

Mr. CHOCOLA. Mr. Speaker, today we debate an issue whose importance reaches farther than the citizens that live within the boundaries of our individual congressional districts—it touches citizens all over the world.

Frankly, it is easy for us in this legislative body to praise or criticize our efforts in Iraq. It is easy for us to come to this floor and talk about the violence in Iraq and the difficulties in forming a free, safe and secure government, then return to our offices and send out press releases.

It is easy because none of us have had to serve in a government that is breathing free air for the first time. None of us have had to form a government under intense international pressure to include members of all viewpoints to avoid sectarian violence. None of us have had to hold elections under the threat of terrorism and destruction. We have not lived under the oppression of a tyrant, nor have we had to fear that speaking our minds could lead to our execution or the execution of our family.

And now that the light of freedom is shining into the darkness that was Iraq, many criticize the Iraqi people for needing time for their eyes to adjust to the light. When did we become this arrogant? At what point did seeing over 70 percent of Iraqi citizens risk their lives to participate in electing a free and democratic government not be good enough for us?

It would be uninformed to characterize our nation's early history as a smooth transition. Sectarian division, violence, and human rights abuses were prevalent in the early United States. I would submit that our adversaries aren't ignorant of this. They understand that the work of forming a stable democracy cannot be accomplished in three and one half years. They are smart enough to recognize the monumental successes that have been achieved by the Iraqi people and our extraordinary men and women in uniform in the face of immense challenges. And they are determined to use the most horrific tactics to stop the spread of freedom.

Their opposition is a strategy of oppression and we must stand united to make sure it does not succeed. I would hope that every so often, the debate on this floor can be about more than temporary politics. I would hope that every once in a while, we can ask ourselves the hard questions and come together to find good answers to the problems not only in this country, but the problems facing the world.

We have risen to the challenge before. On June 9, 1944, shortly after the beginning of the D-Day invasion, the following appeared in the Washington Post: "There is a noise of wrangling on Capitol Hill which has a discordant, ugly sound today. There is a jostling among us for preferences which is incongruous in comparison with the unity among those safeguarding us overseas. Like them, we need to remember now how much unites us, and again draw together."

These words are just as relevant and commanding today as they were 62 years ago. The question we must answer is still the same as it was then: do all men and women deserve to be free? If our answer is yes, then

what is our responsibility toward that goal? I was taught that to whom much is given, much is expected. In this nation we have been given a great gift of freedom. Will we now fail to remember what unites us and deny our hand of assistance to those that seek the same gift we are so fortunate to enjoy?

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to join my colleagues on the Armed Services Committee to have a frank discussion about the Iraq war. We need to make hard choices to ensure that our presence in Iraq does not do long-term damage to our military or endanger the men and women who proudly defend our Nation. However, this resolution doesn't address any of those questions nor does it provide answers for a Nation that demands them. Instead, Republicans have given us more of the same.

In October 2002, I voted against the resolution authorizing the use of force against Iraq, but since then, I have supported every supplemental appropriations measure to fund our troops because it is Congress's responsibility to give them the resources needed to accomplish their mission. It is precisely that support for the troops that motivates me to point out how we may do irreparable harm to our military if we do not alter our mission in Iraq quickly. Our men and women in uniform have performed admirably in difficult conditions—in many cases adapting quickly to missions outside their traditional roles, such as policing and reconstruction. However, the current pace of operations is untenable, and we are seeing evidence of the impact it is having on our military.

Our troops have faced numerous deployments to the area, with the National Guard and Reserve in particular demand because of their expertise in needed skills such as policing, civil affairs, and engineering. Nearly 500,000 members of the Selected Reserves have been mobilized since September 11, with more than 10,000 members having been deployed more than three times. We are spending more and more money in an attempt to meet recruiting and retention goals in the active military and reserve components, and we are nevertheless starting to see increasingly more mid-level officers exiting the force—a dangerous sign for the future health of the military.

Furthermore, the harsh desert conditions in Iraq—coupled with the high operational tempo—have taken their toll on our equipment, which is wearing out at twice to nine times the normal rate. The National Guard has only one-third of its equipment on hand, which weakens our ability to respond to a natural disaster or other major event on U.S. soil. Despite the billions we have provided in supplemental appropriations, it will take years and tens of billions more dollars to restore our forces to appropriate levels.

General Barry McCaffrey recently traveled to Iraq and Afghanistan to assess U.S. operations there. Upon his return, he briefed the Armed Services Committee on his findings and gave us a very frank assessment. He has stated that we should know by the end of the year whether the new Iraqi government will be effective in controlling the insurgency. He has also claimed that we cannot sustain our current level of operations beyond Christmas without breaking our military and endangering our ability to fight future missions. In other words, we are quite possibly six months away

from a point of no return that could have long-ranging effects on our military and the stability of the Middle East.

So what is our strategy to prevent the worst-case scenario from occurring? Where is the accountability? Where is the Congressional oversight? I'll tell you one thing—they're not in the resolution we're debating today. The Republican leadership promised a debate on Iraq but then refused to consider any alternatives to their own bill, preferring to embrace the status quo and ignore the very difficult decisions this Congress needs to make. We deserve better. Our brave men and women in uniform deserve better. The American people deserve better.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. Speaker, it is right for Congress to ask the President to implement a plan to start bringing our troops home from Iraq. That would be the right message to send to the Iraqis: they must assume the responsibility for security of their own country.

Congress needs to have a real and meaningful debate on the future role of the U.S. military in Iraq as we approach the fourth anniversary of the congressional authorization to use force in Iraq. Congress should take seriously its obligation to oversee our military.

The majority has given us one option with this resolution, which is to make a political statement in support of President Bush. The House leadership has refused to allow amendments to this resolution. It is interesting that we are committed to building democratic institutions in Iraq but we are not willing to let the Members of Congress vote on alternative policies in Iraq. Our men and women in uniform that are putting their lives on the line every day deserve the full attention of Congress.

Mr. Speaker, we all agree with those parts of the resolution that: honor Americans who have taken part in the global war on terror, including our first responders, diplomats, military, and intelligence officers; honor the sacrifices of American, Iraqi, and Afghan military forces, and the families of those troops; congratulate the Iraqi people for holding free and fair elections, under a new democratic constitution; supports the efforts of the Iraqi and Afghan people to live in freedom; and declares that the United States will prevail in the global war on terror.

We should be debating whether or not and how to withdraw or redeploy United States Armed Forces from Iraq, and members should be permitted to offer amendments to this resolution. We should not simply be asked to "stay the course." Congress must reclaim its oversight responsibility and ask serious questions about the Iraq war and reconstruction effort.

I am convinced that we must change course. The repositioning of our troops would help us to regain the focus on the war on terror.

The President came to Congress in October 2002 and asked Congress to authorize force against Iraq. I voted against giving the President this authority, and parted ways with most of my colleagues in Congress. This was not a popular vote at the time, but it was the right vote. I was proud of my vote then as I am now.

I have remained an outspoken critic of President Bush's policies in Iraq. There was no connection between the events of 9/11 and the Saddam Hussein regime. The Bush Administration distorted and misused intelligence information about Saddam Hussein's actual

WMD capacity. Saddam Hussein did not have nuclear weapons, and did not pose an imminent threat to the United States.

During our debate in 2002, I stated on the House floor that I had "grave concerns" about a unilateral, pre-emptive military attack by the United States which could "endanger our global coalition against terrorism." I also stated that "we cannot overlook the massive cost and effort that the United States would have to undertake in a post-Saddam regime." Finally, I stated that "the United States will need the help of its allies as it attempts to transition Iraq from a dictatorship to a democracy." I regret to say that I was correct on all these counts.

The President prematurely disbanded the Iraqi security forces. After overthrowing Saddam, the President protected the oil ministries, but not the weapons and ammunition depots, which were looted by insurgents and are now being used to attack American forces. The President did not provide the heavy armor needed for our troops and equipment. The President did not plan for an insurgency. Finally, the President invaded Iraq and then attempted to reconstruct Iraq without seeking any significant assistance from the international community.

We have paid a heavy price. More than 2,500 American soldiers are dead. More than 18,000 American soldiers have been injured. We have spent over \$300 billion to date on the Iraq war and reconstruction.

Mr. Speaker, in December 2004 I visited Iraq as part of a Congressional delegation. I wanted to see the situation on the ground in Iraq firsthand. It is an experience that I will not soon forget. I thanked our troops for their service, including troops from Maryland and from our Maryland Guard and Maryland Reserve. Our troops have performed with honor and distinction and have done everything that we have asked of them. Our troops deserve to come home to their families and a grateful nation.

Yet the President still says that we must stay the course. We need to immediately change course in Iraq, which must include the drawdown of U.S. troops from Iraq. We currently have approximately 130,000 troops in Iraq, roughly 20 percent of which are Guard and Reserve troops. Military experts have recommended a drawdown of at least 10,000 troops a month. It is not necessary for us to announce a specific timeline for the withdrawal of our troops. It is reasonable to expect, however, that one-half of our combat troops should come home by the end of 2006, and that all of our combat troops should come home by the end of 2007.

We should make sure that our National Guard are the first to come home, as they were never intended to be used as the primary military force for overseas conflicts. Our Guard units should be made available for local needs.

The drawdown of American troops from Iraq back home will allow us to achieve certain necessary objectives. First, we will bring our troops home to their families, and take them out of the middle of a civil war. Our soldiers should not be used as police officers. Second, we will send an important message to the Iraqi government to take responsibility. U.S. troops cannot remain in Iraq indefinitely. Third, we will remove a powerful propaganda and recruitment tool for Al Qaeda that the United States is an occupation force. Fourth, we

would be able to stage our troops outside of Iraq to work with our allies and the international community to fight the war against international terrorism. The repositioning of our troops would help us to regain the focus we have lost on the war on terror. Finally, bringing our troops home would help us preserve the strength of our all-volunteer military by improving troop morale and boosting our efforts to improve recruitment of new soldiers.

The United States should convene an international conference on Iraq which would include the government of Iraq. As the sole remaining superpower, the United States needs to mend diplomatic fences. Such a conference should achieve three primary goals. First, it should produce a verifiable cease-fire. Second, it would establish a mechanism for the completion of the training of Iraqi security forces. Finally, it would coordinate all international humanitarian and reconstruction assistance to the new Iraqi government.

Finally, we must honor our commitment to our military and veterans' families, which will strengthen our recruitment efforts for new troops. Our volunteer military is in danger. The morale of our troops is suffering due to longer tours of duties and budgets that have not fully funded veterans' benefits, particularly in meeting their health care needs.

Our recruitment efforts have fallen short in the military, as both the Army National Guard and Army Reserve have only met roughly 80% of their recruiting goals.

The answer is the proper deployment of our troops, and the full funding of our veterans' benefits, particularly their health care needs. These benefits are particularly relevant considering we have 18,000 wounded veterans so far as a result of the Iraq war. We must also bear in mind that estimates indicate that 50,000 war veterans will experience battle fatigue and post traumatic stress disorder, PTSD, and will require extensive treatment and rehabilitation.

Mr. Speaker, I call on the President to immediately change course in Iraq, including the implementation of a plan to start bringing our troops home from Iraq.

Mr. KENNEDY of Rhode Island. Mr. Speaker, the last two days the House has debated for over 10 hours a politically motivated resolution on Iraq. Not one word in this resolution will do anything to bring us one step closer to success in Iraq, or one day closer to bringing our troops home.

This resolution is not about the troops.

If it were, this resolution would actually do something to hold accountable those responsible for the manipulation of pre-war intelligence, the poor planning, the incompetence, and the mismanagement that has brought us to this point in Iraq. This resolution does nothing to give our troops a real plan that charts a path toward victory and home.

Instead what we have is another attempt at re-writing history to buck up fading support for this administration's failed status quo policies.

As even Secretary Condoleezza Rice has acknowledged, the administration has made mistake after mistake when it comes to Iraq. It is the military that has saved them, even as civilian policymakers have scorned and marginalized senior combat generals who have criticized them.

Last week's elimination of al-Zarqawi was a reminder of the skill and determination of our men and women in uniform. It is our troops

and their families who have borne the brunt of sacrifice in this war, and they continue to persevere despite the failures of this administration.

For the past 12 years, I have voted for every bill that supports our troops and honors the sacrifices they and their families make in defending our Nation. For every year of this war, I have voted for every appropriations bill funding our troops, fighting to provide them with the bulletproof vests and up-armored Humvees that they were sent into Iraq without.

But the administration needs to understand that more of the same P.R., rosier rhetoric, better stagecraft at another rally, or viciously attacking generals who served on the ground in Iraq will not achieve success in Iraq, nor bring us one step closer to bringing our troops home.

The administration needs to wake up and stop taking the American people for a spin.

Public confidence in this administration's handling of Iraq has plummeted because the American people have seen through the rhetoric to see the reality on the ground in Iraq.

No amount of publicity stunts and political posturing can change that.

More of the same from the administration will not make our country any safer from terrorists than we were on September 11, 2001. A poll conducted by Foreign Policy magazine of our Nation's top 100 foreign policy minds, liberal and conservative alike, found that 84 percent did not believe that the U.S. was winning the war on terror. Sharing that view was 71 percent of conservatives.

The status quo is not acceptable. We need a change. The administration needs to take the ideological blinders off and acknowledge the reality of the facts on the ground.

As GEN John Abizaid and Ambassador Khalilzad have stated, the reality is that civil war is now a greater threat than insurgency.

Because of the regional destabilization that could follow, I do not believe we can pull out of Iraq precipitously. But I cannot support letting Iraq become an open-ended commitment without limit or end.

So instead of occupying themselves with defending their mistakes of the past, the administration should focus instead on achieving real measurable progress on the ground in Iraq so our troops can begin to come home.

Miss McMORRIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to stress the importance of our country's role in the Global War on Terror and to observe the heroic, enduring efforts of our men and women in uniform who are working to secure freedom and democracy for the people of Iraq.

In January, I stood with the Eastern Washington families and colleagues of nearly 100 airmen from Fairchild Air Force Base and said goodbye as they were deployed to Iraq for 4 months. In April, I had the opportunity to travel to Iraq and visit with these members of the 92nd Air Refueling Wing and the 141st Air National Guard Medical Squadron. And in May, I was privileged to welcome them back to Eastern Washington with gratitude for their work on behalf of our Nation and in pursuit of freedom and democracy in Iraq.

Troops based at Eastern Washington have long played a central role in the Global War on Terror. In Iraq, they assisted in the rebuilding of airfields and other crucial infrastructure projects. In April 2004, a crew deployed from Fairchild delivered the one-billionth pound of jet fuel in the Iraqi theater from a KC-135 to

an F-16CJ Fighting Falcon from the 555th Fighter Squadron.

Much deserved attention is given to the combat efforts of our troops serving alongside Iraqi Defense Forces to protect the fragile but promising unity government and the Iraqi people whom it represents. Yet I would draw attention also to the remarkable accomplishments of service men and women who are rapidly restoring the infrastructure—roads, airports, and utilities—that is critical to Iraq sustaining itself.

But even beyond the duty and mission charged to them, many of our troops are volunteering to help out at orphanages and day cares in Iraq. We should be encouraged by the commitment and compassion that these soldiers show to the comprehensive task of restoration in Iraq.

Congress must continue to support the unity government of Iraq as it rebuilds its country. Like the generations before them, fighting Nazis and Communists, United States warfighters are today doing a duty for which we can never repay them. I express my undying appreciation for their commitment and their sacrifice.

One of the priorities in assisting the Iraqi people is establishing an independent, self-sufficient Iraqi Security Force. Here our progress has been astounding. Today, there are over 264,600 trained and equipped members of the Iraqi Security Force. The ISF is conducting 84 percent of company-level operations independently or along side coalition forces. This will give Iraq the ability to defend itself and participate as allies in the Global War on Terror.

On the urgency of the Global War on Terror, there is no debate. And it would be irresponsible for this Congress to deny the fact that Iraq is a front in that war or to abandon our efforts there.

The fierceness of the foreign-led insurgency that was drawn to Iraq after the collapse of Saddam Hussein's regime is evidence that the presence of democracy in Iraq and the United States aggressive pursuit of the roots of terror abroad are deadly threats to al-Qaida and others across the globe. We are fighting this tyrannical and ruthless enemy precisely where we should be—thousands of miles away from American families and American soil. To think that terrorists would confine their attacks to Iraq's borders is to not recognize the reality of the threats we face.

We must not abandon the people of Iraq. We must not neglect an opportunity to strike lethal blows to the Islamic extremist network. We must assist the Iraqi people in establishing a free, stable and secure nation and not give up until then. The security of our country and our families depend on it.

Mr. BARTON of Texas. I rise today in support of H. Res. 861 and our efforts in Iraq. Democracy's biggest strength is also its biggest weakness. Democracy is the strongest form of government when the people and allied governments are united in a common goal. Because the United States worked hand-in-hand with Europe, we were able to defeat fascism in World War II and the totalitarian threat of Hitler and imperial Japan.

Conversely, democracy's weakness arises when the people do not wholeheartedly believe in the cause. For example, Vietnam included a hazy mission and the drafting of unwilling participants. Policy was diverted due to powerful public opinion.

We are not in Iraq and Afghanistan today because the President seeks for us to be. We are there because the public was outraged after the attacks of September 11, and rightly so. We were deliberately attacked by a terrorist regime seeking to cripple the United States. It was the dramatic escalation of decades of terrorist attacks. We felt these attacks deeply in our financial center of New York, at the Pentagon, and were almost hit at the heart of our Government, the Capitol building, were it not for the brave passengers of Flight 93.

But as a nation, we chose to not lie dormant anymore. We chose to show the resolve of America and defeat the enemy of terrorist regimes and the countries that harbor them. I support the policy of not giving in to totalitarianism or terrorist threats. And I support the military if force becomes the necessary method of resolution. Progress is being made in Iraq, and our troops will be successful in supporting this new democratic government. We are not propping up a dictatorial regime; we are working to help democracy take hold in the Middle East. And our efforts are paying off.

The idea that all people desire to be free is a powerful one. This idea is our single biggest weapon, and will ultimately bring success to this fight. The government that allows its citizens to steer their own course is undeniably stronger and more peaceful. I believe our troops are making incredible progress and so are the people in Iraq who are working for an inclusive, stable government. I remain committed to supporting all of their good works.

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, I rise in reluctant opposition to this resolution.

I say reluctant opposition—because I agree with much of what this resolution says.

I support its statements about honoring the sacrifices of our troops and their families. There's no question that our military is the most professional fighting force in the world, and we are all grateful to our men and women in uniform for putting their lives on the line for our country.

I support the resolution's statements congratulating the new prime minister upon forming his government and the Iraqi people for their courage in participating in elections, and calling on the nations of the world to work together for global peace.

I even agree with the statement that we should not set an arbitrary date for the redeployment of our troops.

I opposed the Iraq war resolution, but I have resisted supporting an artificial deadline for withdrawing troops. I believe that how we withdraw is as important as when we withdraw. This means giving the Iraqis time to get their newly installed permanent government up and running and establish the means for international support. We must exercise deep care in the way our country withdraws because leaving a failed state in Iraq will deeply endanger our country.

But I profoundly disagree with the overall tone of the resolution and disagree even more with the way this debate was conducted.

Mr. Speaker, a few months ago—in response to pressure from both sides of the aisle—the Republican leadership promised a full debate on Iraq.

What we got was certainly a long debate, but it was far from "full." A full debate would mean that Members would have been able to offer alternatives to this resolution. We would

then have been able to debate the merits of all the resolutions offered.

I had hoped to offer the bipartisan resolution I introduced with my colleague JOE SCHWARZ of Michigan that recognizes political progress in Iraq, including the establishment of a national unity government, but also recognizes that more progress is needed, and that the Iraqis must meet their own deadline for modifications to their new constitution.

As it is, the debate has been tightly controlled, and our only choice is to vote up or down on a status quo resolution that doesn't focus on Iraq and that doesn't reflect reality on the ground.

If this were a real debate on Iraq, it would be about where we are versus where we thought we'd be, and where we should go from here. Just last year, Congress called for 2006 to be a year of transition in Iraq that would allow U.S. forces to begin to redeploy. But we're into the middle of June, and we are actually adding troops.

A real debate would begin by recognizing that Iraq is a distinct issue, only part of the "global war on terror" insofar as the security vacuum in Iraq has attracted terrorists. But as the gentleman from Missouri, Mr. SKELTON, has said—Iraq is a separate conflict, an insurgency with terrorist elements and sectarian violence.

A real debate would have been honest about how continuous deployment in Iraq hurts our military personnel and their families, strains recruiting and retention, and damages readiness.

A real debate would have looked at the human cost. We are losing one battalion every month of killed or wounded soldiers. Just yesterday the military reported that we've hit a tragic milestone. A total of 2500 American men and women have lost their lives in Iraq. More than 18,000 have been wounded. Attacks on U.S. forces are now at their highest rate ever—900 a month.

A real debate would have looked at the financial cost. We are mortgaging our future and the future of our children. So far Congress has appropriated \$320 billion for Iraq alone, a war that was supposed to pay for itself through proceeds from the sale of Iraqi oil, and the "bum rate" is now up to \$8 billion per month. That's \$2 billion every week, or \$286 million every single day.

And if we were really concerned about the well-being of our troops, we would be talking about the fact that every one of the Army's available active duty combat brigades has served at least one 12-month tour in Iraq or Afghanistan, 40 percent of the National Guard and Reserves has been mobilized since September 11th, and nearly half of those mobilized have been deployed two or more times. We need to consider that the readiness of Army units here in the U.S. is at the lowest level since the late 1970s.

We would also have considered what it means for current and future readiness that fully 40 percent of the Army and Marine Corps ground equipment is deployed to Iraq and that equipment in Iraq is wearing out five times faster than the rate in peacetime. If the war in Iraq ended today, the Army would require two years of supplemental appropriations and at least \$24 billion dollars to repair and replace equipment.

If we were properly concerned about our National Guard, we would have addressed the

fact that it only has about 34 percent of its equipment on hand, down from 75 percent of its requirement in 2001. The missing equipment has been left in Iraq or transferred to units deploying to Iraq. The Army National Guard has been directed to transfer more than 75,000 pieces of equipment valued at \$1.76 billion to the Army to support operations in Iraq. There is no plan to replace these items.

No matter how each Member chooses to vote today, there's no question that we all honor and support our troops. But I would argue that if we really cared for our troops, we would make sure they had the equipment and training they need. We wouldn't make it less possible for them to meet some future mission. No one wants a new mission for our troops, but if we had to fight somewhere else, we wouldn't have the equipment or forces to do it.

These are the things that we should have been debating, not the "feel good" messages included in the Republican resolution. We all want to feel good about Iraq and believe that progress is possible. But we can't want progress so much that we blind ourselves to the reality on the ground.

Of course, it's hard to know reality on the ground if Congress does no oversight. Congress has a fundamental responsibility to review how the money it appropriates is being spent and to ask tough questions. The Republican majority would have us believe that asking questions makes us unpatriotic.

But that's just wrong. We abrogate our responsibility to the American people if we shut our eyes to how their tax dollars are being spent.

The Republican leadership seems unable to come up with anything other than the same old tired lines. They will all toe the Administration line when they vote today, but we all know that even Republicans are having doubts as to the wisdom of the President's direction in Iraq.

Mr. Speaker, we were led into war as a divided nation and today we are even more divided. A successful withdrawal from Iraq can only happen if Congress and the Bush Administration work to bring unity at home.

This resolution doesn't bring us together, Mr. Speaker, and I regret that the Republican leadership continues to seek to divide this House. But that is the course they have chosen, and so they have left me no choice but to reluctantly oppose this resolution today.

Mr. TAYLOR of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the brave soldiers who have sacrificed so much to ensure our Nation's freedom.

I am extremely proud of all of Western North Carolina's brave men and women, including the 210th and 211th Military Police Units, who have fought courageously to establish a united, free, and sovereign Iraq.

The sacrifices these men and women make are unimaginable, whether it's spending time away from their families, enduring financial hardships, or laying their very lives on the line for freedom. And while these sacrifices are great, we must not forget that they are fighting to protect the world from the grip of terrorism. By risking their lives in Iraq and abroad, these brave men and women, including my son, are protecting the lives of American families and making our country safer.

Four men from Western North Carolina have given their lives in the Iraq conflict. At-

tending the funeral of one of those men—CW03 Mitchell Carver—served as a stark reminder that freedom is not free. It is not the press who protect a Nation's right to free speech; instead, it is men like Mitch Carver who choose the responsibility to do so. And Mitch Carver is not alone. In the eight years I have been privileged to serve as a representative on the Board of Visitors of our Nation's military academy at West Point, I have seen thousands of young men and women take the oath to protect us. Theirs is a simple pledge: "Duty, Honor, Country."

To me the great and central question in our debate is this: Are the Iraqi people capable of and deserving of democracy? The answer is quite simple. Any man or woman, nation, or civilization that thirsts to live free from tyranny, desires to speak freely, and wishes to freely and fairly elect their leaders is worthy of the great gift of democracy. We have seen the images of Iraqi men and women with tears in their eyes as they cast their first votes in the parliamentary elections. Iraq has embraced democracy with a contagious enthusiasm. Democracy is never easy, but in due time Iraq will be a beacon of hope for the Middle East. To turn our backs on the Iraqi people as they are making such great strides would be arrogant and foolish. In short, it is abandonment not only of the Iraqi people, but also of the principles which we have preached and practiced as a nation for more than two hundred years.

I wish to express my sincere gratitude to our brave troops and our Iraqi allies. We owe the men and women in our Armed Forces a debt of gratitude—their courage should inspire us all. I encourage all Americans to join me in continuing to keep our troops and their families in our thoughts and prayers.

Ms. VELAZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, today I rise once more to denounce our continued involvement in the Iraq war, which was the wrong decision, at the wrong time, based on wrong information. And, what are we doing today to correct all those wrong actions?—absolutely nothing—nothing but talk about it. It is time for a change; it is time for a new direction.

We are having a debate today to adopt a resolution that merely expresses this chamber's views and opinions on our current military engagements in the War on Terror. This resolution honors our men and women who have given their lives in the defense of this country and it honors our armed forces presently on active engagement overseas, among other things. These praises to our armed forces are indeed truly deserved, as they have been thrust into a very difficult conflict with perilous conditions.

However, I think our troops can better appreciate Congress' good intentions with actions rather than mere congratulatory words. This majority could have demonstrated our appreciation of the troops through laws that gave them all the equipment they needed when we sent them to war. This majority could have shown their commitment by demanding that the Commander in Chief clearly layout a plan of action and exit strategy, instead of allowing the continuing improvisation our troops have endured. This majority certainly might have demonstrated its commitment to the troops by not nickel and diming them on health care and making their reintegration to civil society more difficult and costly; and this majority definitely could have made the ultimate honor by ac-

knowledging their well done job by bringing the troops home.

This majority only wants to praise them—but won't lift a finger to make sure our troops can come home sooner rather than later. We constantly hear the mantras such as: Stay the course; we are making progress and so on and so forth. That is the extent of their strategy. Mr. Speaker enough is enough! It is time to bring the troops home!

Iraq has a new democratic government; it is our responsibility to help them secure their country. This country can help Iraq, as it helps other countries, protect itself by providing resources and equipment. We need to let them fight for their country in their way. It is time to be friends and not guardians, let Iraq fight for Iraq. Our troops have done their job; it is time to bring them home.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to say we need to bring our troops home.

Before continuing, though, I must say that this resolution before us, unfortunately, is perfectly irrelevant to the choices facing the American people and this Congress. It is transparently political, does nothing to get us out of our predicament in Iraq, and is a crude attempt to intimidate and smear those who wish to honor the desire of the American people by bringing our troops home. This resolution attempts to reinforce the lies that led us to war which have been refuted and disproved many times over.

All of the lies that were offered to justify sending our men and women to fight and die have evaporated in the light of truth. All that we are left with is this argument that we're there now, so we have to stay "as long as it takes." This is nonsense.

This is the same illogical rhetoric that kept our Nation in Vietnam, the rhetoric that doubled the cost of that conflict in American lives. More than half the combat deaths in Vietnam occurred after Richard Nixon was elected on a promise to bring the war to an end, and after the American people had already decided that they did not want one more soldier to die in Vietnam.

Our vital task today in this Congress is to prevent a repeat of that tragedy in Iraq, to stop the bleeding, to make the will of the American people, which is to bring our troops home, the policy of our government as soon as possible. Our task today is to save the lives of our troops who remain in Iraq by bringing them home.

We in this Congress have a choice. The American people have a right to exercise a choice on this issue, as to whether our men and women will continue to fight and die in a war based on deception and fantasy, or to start bringing the troops home.

The American people have decided that it was a mistake to choose to go to war in Iraq.

The American people deserve some answers, as to how we could spend so much in Iraq and achieve so little. They deserve to know why all this money is being spent on a war of choice, when one on eight Americans lives in poverty, and when 46 million Americans have no health insurance, including 13 million children.

No one in this body wants to see terrorism and the rule of force prevail in Iraq. Some on the other side say otherwise, but I believe they know better.

Bringing the troops home is necessary not just for the future of Iraq, but also for the people of the United States. We must stop the

hemorrhaging of tax dollars that could go to meet our Nation's vital domestic needs.

This war of choice in Iraq is undermining the very fabric of American society.

By the end of this year, the costs of the invasion and occupation of Iraq will total \$450 billion; \$450 billion spent in Iraq, who knows how much of it going to corrupt, crony contractors.

All of the President's statements amount to excuses for an open-ended, seemingly never-ending commitment of our troops to occupy Iraq. He is trying to salvage the terrible wager he made in Iraq by doubling down the bet with human lives: Iraqi and American.

While this debate today is a belated effort to inform the American people, it is nevertheless an empty gesture. It is time to admit our mistake in Iraq and begin to bring our troops home with honor.

Mr. MATHESON. Mr. Speaker, I am deeply concerned about the current situation in Iraq, as are the vast majority of Americans. We need an honest assessment from the civilian leadership at the Pentagon about what is working and what is not working, and what needs to change in terms of our strategy.

I strongly oppose efforts to weaken the position of our military by setting an arbitrary deadline for withdrawal of our military forces. We all want American troops to return home from Iraq as soon as possible. Some Members of Congress have called for an immediate withdrawal from Iraq—I disagree with them.

As a longtime supporter of our military, I believe that a calendar-based date for withdrawal serves as a rallying point for insurgents. It also places a target on the backs of American troops. Finally, I am very concerned that the immediate withdrawal of U.S. troops would leave a volatile vacuum of power in Iraq, which would rapidly be filled by insurgents. A better alternative is for Congress to clearly delineate the conditions that, if met, would permit a U.S. withdrawal.

Standing around arguing about why we're in this position doesn't serve a good purpose, in my opinion. Instead, I think today's debate is an opportunity to talk about how we can develop a strategy for success. Regardless of when the last American soldier leaves Iraq, I want to be able to look at him or her and be able to say that the service of our military achieved something greater than the political ends of a few here in Washington. I hope all of my colleagues share that desire. A strategy for success should be comprehensive—it should include not just a military role, but also a plan for political, diplomatic, and economic success.

In the next few weeks, a field artillery unit from my district—the 222nd—is heading home after a long year in Iraq. These soldiers have made immense sacrifices on behalf of our great Nation and I am so grateful that they're going to be back in Utah. We all have constituents serving overseas and I would like to take this opportunity to sincerely thank our military service members for their work on behalf of all Americans.

Mr. GRAVES. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of House Resolution 861. Since the tragic events of September 11, 2001, we have pursued terrorists and brought them to justice around the world. In this Global War on Terror—where evil, bloodthirsty fanatics kill to prevent democracy and liberty from taking

root—there is no option for the forces of freedom but victory. This resolution affirms our commitment to victory. It is a solemn declaration that we will prevail over the terrorists, and that we will do so hand in hand with all who cherish freedom and repudiate extremism.

Mr. Speaker, I came to Congress in January 2001. The Global War on Terror has been the defining issue during much of my time here on Capitol Hill. From that perspective, I can state that we have made tremendous progress in strengthening our defenses at home, and taking the fight to our enemies overseas.

I visited Iraq for the first time in December 2003, shortly before the capture of Saddam Hussein. At that time, the Iraqi Governing Council had been formed, but the Coalition Provisional Authority still exercised most of the essential functions of government. In December 2003, Iraqi sovereignty seemed possible, but distant.

I returned to Iraq this past Memorial Day recess. We are well on our way to achieving our goals. The death of Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, the foreign terrorist who was al-Qaeda's top commander in Iraq, puts us one step closer to neutralizing the insurgency and defeating the terrorists. Democracy and liberty have taken root in the heart of a region that is not known for either. The Iraq I visited two weeks ago had a sovereign, democratic government; the result of three successful elections.

And after much negotiation, the Iraqi government recently named interior, defense, and security ministers. These new ministers will continue to lead Iraq to security self-reliance.

As an example of the improved security on the ground, it was my honor and privilege to be part of the first Congressional Delegation to spend the night Baghdad.

The new leaders of Iraq implored me to bring back a message to this Congress: Iraq will never achieve security self-reliance if the United States leaves before its work is done. If we leave before our job is done, the terrorists and insurgents will not only wreak greater havoc upon the Iraqi people, but they will also create a terrorist state from which to perpetrate acts of violence against those who disagree with their world view.

For the sake of our own national security, we must do everything we can to support the new leaders of Iraq.

Mr. Speaker, I also had the opportunity to visit Afghanistan during the Memorial Day Recess. President Karzai heads a fully democratic government, the culmination of a complete transition to democracy. Women now have the right to vote and work. Although President Karzai's government has greatly extended its authority, history teaches us that we cannot let any part of Afghanistan remain a haven for terrorists. We must continue to pursue, capture, and eradicate the remaining Al Qaeda/Taliban terrorists.

What I saw overseas is not what is being reported by the media back home. The Iraqi economy is picking up steam: currency is more stable, the national stock exchange is up and running, and business registrations are on the rise. More roads and schools are being built as we speak, and the oil sector shows promise as pipeline security efforts increase. In Afghanistan, the Al Qaeda/Taliban terrorists are on the run and 28% of Afghan Parliament delegates are women.

What our troops told me is not what is being reported either. We have the finest military in

the world, and morale is high. Our brave troops know the world will be safer when the mission is complete. We must stand strong and support our troops and allies in this fight against global terror.

Mr. MARCHANT. Mr. Speaker, America and its allies are engaged in a war against a terrorist movement that spans all corners of the globe. It is sparked by radical ideologues that breed hatred, oppression, and violence against all of their declared enemies. Since September 11, 2001, the powerful coalition of nations, led by the United States, has seen many successes against al-Qaeda and other terrorist groups. It is imperative that we remain united and steadfast in the quest to defeat terrorism around the world.

Last year I traveled to the Middle East to visit with troops in Kuwait, Iraq, and Afghanistan. I came away with several observations:

First, morale of the troops is HIGH. They are confident of the progress they have made in the mission to spread freedom and democracy in the Middle East. Not one serviceman or woman I encountered had any doubts about the purpose and importance of his or her presence there. The troops are positive and appreciative of all of the support they received from back home.

Their confidence in their mission is well-justified. Since my visit, the Iraqis have ratified a new constitution and installed a new, strong Prime Minister, Nuri Al-Maliki. And now the latest milestone: Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, al-Qaeda's leader in Iraq, was killed in an air raid last week.

Mr. Speaker, as I sat in a tent in Kuwait eating dinner with troops from Texas, I was struck by how young most of them were. Those soldiers with me were 18–20 years old. Their experiences and their stories humbled me. Never in my life have I felt such emotion and love for our service men and women than when I sat and looked at these brave young soldiers. Barely out of high school, yet each day these heroes awaken knowing of the perils that lie ahead. Danger awaits them, but they continue to make a great sacrifice each day so that you and I can be free.

I sometimes feel that we Americans take our freedoms and our lives for granted. We forget the images of 9/11. Yet while on my trip to the Middle East, the London bombings occurred. This was yet another stark reminder that if we don't fight terrorists abroad, they just get closer to our home.

Mr. Speaker, the War on Terror is a global effort; it reaches beyond a small concentration of countries in the Middle East. I'd like to share the story of Marine Staff Sergeant Nathan Fletcher. Sergeant Fletcher's wife, Mindy, lived in Dallas and also worked for another war hero, my fellow Texas Congressman SAM JOHNSON, on Capitol Hill. He is currently experiencing his third extended separation from Mindy since they married a few years ago and the start of the war on terrorism.

Sergeant Fletcher is serving in a very remote region in the Horn of Africa. He is part of a Combined Joint Task Force focused on defeating transnational terrorist groups operating in the region. Sergeant Fletcher and his fellow troops in Africa lack amenities like running water, reliable power, and air conditioning. There is no internet, television, or even paved roads. Because they are so far away from the main camp they eat off the local economy. There are no fruits or vegetables where he is based, and so far he has

eaten camel, goat, lamb, beef, and a couple things he could not identify. They cook their meals over an open fire and sleep outside every night.

Sergeant Fletcher's wife writes, "His team is doing well and I know they are working very long hours. I can't imagine going 40 days without running water in temperatures over 100 degrees without air conditioning, but I know Nathan and other servicemen and women do it everyday." She continues, "Iraq and Afghanistan get most of the focus, but our troops are fighting the global war on terror throughout the world. I am really proud that he is part of making sure al-Qaeda and other terrorists aren't able to expand into another part of the world."

Mr. Speaker, Sergeant Fletcher and the millions of other troops fighting the War on Terror around the world believe in what they're doing. They don't want to stop. They know their mission is right. We owe it to them to see this campaign for democracy through until we are completely victorious.

Mindy no doubt wishes that Nathan was at home with her. Nathan no doubt wishes he was at home sitting in the air conditioning and eating a t-bone steak rather than camel steak. Yet they both know the reasons and the importance of the mission.

Mr. Speaker, Sergeant Fletcher is enduring these harsh conditions for our freedom. Make no mistake—this mission is not only justified, it is essential. Let us never forget the Pearl Harbors, the attacks of 9/11. Let us never forget the freedom we have. Let us never forget the Sergeant Fletchers and the sacrifices they make for us.

Mr. Speaker, we must not lay down our arms now. We must press on, for freedom, for peace.

Mr. POMEROY. Mr. Speaker, the resolution under consideration today presents Congress with a single option—to endorse the Administration's handling of the War in Iraq. Such an endorsement means committing our troops to protracted, open-ended involvement for an indefinite number of years while incurring thousands of additional casualties and spending hundreds of billions of dollars.

Unfortunately, this is a counterproductive option. I do not believe the newly elected Iraqi government can achieve the politically daunting challenge of building a democracy as long as there is an expectation that the United States will always be there providing the principle security and defense roles for the country.

Exceedingly difficult compromises between the ethnic and sectarian factions in Iraq need to be made, and those compromises must be determined by the Iraqis themselves. The Administration's course currently is emboldening these factions to seek maximum advantage for their respective groups—even as the business of building a united country is harmed significantly. The result is a full blown insurgency which increasingly looks like a civil war in destruction and effect.

The Administration did not foresee these challenges, and certain officials still appear to be in denial of this reality. The United States deserves new leadership on Iraq and a new course, and the Administration should take the steps to remove those who have brought us to the present circumstances and revitalize our effort with a new leadership team.

I have traveled to Iraq on three occasions. After my last trip in October 2005, I came

away strongly believing in the need for a timely transition of responsibility to Iraqis. One month later, when this House debated a resolution ordering an immediate withdrawal of troops from the nation, I opposed the resolution, but I noted the following: "We need to come together on an exit strategy for our soldiers based upon the transition of security to the Iraqis themselves in order to give the new democratic government of the people of Iraq a fair chance of success."

I still oppose an "immediate withdrawal" ordered by the U.S. Congress. Some will argue that opposition to an indefinite U.S. military presence in Iraq means support for immediately abandoning Iraq. This is completely false. I favor leaving military commanders with authority for the military redeployment and troop drawdown. I do not favor near term deadlines imposed by Congress as the way to accomplish this result.

I strongly support our troops and their families. I support giving them the resources they need to do their job, and the benefits they deserve.

I support winning the Global War on Terror. For these reasons, I cannot support this resolution. It is too open-ended, too blind to the reality of the difficulties we are facing, and too simplistic a resolution for the complex situation in which we find ourselves.

Mr. COSTELLO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the resolution before us today, despite the fact that it barely touches on the war in Iraq, which is the stated purpose of our debate, and makes some claims I do not agree with. While I will vote yes, I want to be absolutely clear that I am doing so to emphatically support our troops and the bravery they display every day in fighting the war on terror. I did not vote to authorize the Iraq War and continue to believe it was a mistake. I do not agree with parts of this resolution that misstate the original administration arguments for invading Iraq. The heart of this discussion needs to be that the Bush administration has been almost totally inept in its planning and prosecution of the war and occupation of Iraq.

Time and again, the Bush administration has been wrong. Before invading Iraq, we were told that Saddam Hussein was an imminent threat to the United States. After attending the briefings provided by the administration, I did not feel that administration officials made this case, and the lack of weapons of mass destruction certainly undercuts this argument. Even worse, we were given a stream of incorrect assumptions of the costs of the invasion and occupation of Iraq. Then-Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz testified before a Senate Committee and predicted that the monetary cost of the war to the United States would not exceed \$2 billion. Including money to be appropriated this year, we are approaching \$400 billion, and continue to spend \$8.1 billion every month in Iraq. Wolfowitz also said Iraq had no history of ethnic strife.

It is important to remember that the Bush administration assertions were not conventional wisdom at the time. Both then-Army Chief of Staff, GEN Eric Shinseki, and then-Bush economic adviser Larry Lindsey, soon left their positions after publicly stating, respectively, that the war would take large numbers of troops and hundreds of billions of dollars to prosecute.

Further, it quickly became clear that the planning of the occupation of Iraq was woe-

fully inadequate, placing our soldiers in increasing danger. Stories of inadequate supplies of bulletproof vests and armor for humvees documented this fact. The outspoken concern of former generals in regard to these preparations further underscored the problems. The intensity of the insurgency caught the administration by surprise.

The United States has allocated \$50 billion to private contractors for reconstruction and rebuilding efforts in Iraq since the beginning of the war. Nine billion dollars in reconstruction funds are unaccounted for, while the Defense Contract Audit Agency has deemed that \$1.47 billion spent by the Halliburton Corporation was excessive or insufficiently documented. Oil production is at 2.2 million barrels per day—down from 2.6 million barrels per day prior to the war.

The resolution we are debating also says "... the terrorists have declared Iraq to be the central front in their war against all who oppose their ideology." This is true only because we gave them the opportunity to do so. Iraq clearly was not the central front before the U.S. invasion—another unfortunate outcome of poor planning.

I continue to believe that part of our decision making process concerning how to move forward in Iraq must include an analysis of how we got there. It is not enough to say that since we are there, we have to make the best of it. I agree that we cannot just walk away, and do not support a certain date for our exit, but we still do not have any framework for evaluating our progress there. While the death of Al Zarqawi is great news, and it seems that Iraqi security forces are taking on more responsibility, does anyone really believe that in one year, or two years, or even five years, that Iraq will be able to defend itself?

I said at the outset of this war that the United States was going to pay the vast majority of its costs, in both lives and dollars, and this has clearly been the case. We must re-engage the international community to take on more of the burdens of the occupation, and seek to bring our troops home as soon as possible.

Today, I join my colleagues in celebrating the extraordinary efforts and accomplishments of our troops. But I do not celebrate our country's undertaking of the invasion and occupation of Iraq. It was a bad decision followed by numerous other bad decisions, and while I hope it ends well, we will feel the ramifications in many ways for years to come.

Mr. CANTOR. Mr. Speaker, the members of this House have had a lengthy and passionate debate today. When these hours of debate are over, I think the American people need a clear understanding of what the Democrats propose to do.

Lets look at the Democrats' blueprint, the Murtha Plan.

The Murtha Plan proposes to have our forces "redployed at the earliest practicable date" with no details about what that means. Meanwhile, the Iraqi leadership only days ago requested for our forces to continue their side-by-side work with Iraqi forces. The Democrats' plan advocates redeployment before the job is done, which is nothing short of retreat.

The Murtha Plan calls for the creation of a "quick-reaction force" and an "over-the-horizon presence of U.S. Marines" with, again, no details about what exactly that means. The Democrats continue to advocate retreat, while

our President has stated time and time again that our commanders on the ground will determine the tactical plans, not politicians in Washington.

The Murtha Plan calls for America to “pursue security and stability in Iraq through diplomacy.” Are Democrats suggesting that we can negotiate with terrorists? This is a war unlike any other. If we leave this front now, the terrorists will come after us somewhere else. This is not about territory or conquest. This is a fight for the future of the free world.

The Murtha Plan supported by the Democrats is nothing more than an enormous step backwards in the fight against the Islamic fascists. It is a rehash of the same old policies of appeasement and retreat that contributed greatly to our lack of preparedness for the 9/11 attacks. The policy of appeasement and non-engagement has only emboldened terrorists in the past.

Thankfully, our President has charted a new course to take the fight to the terrorists so we do not have to fight them here at home. We must aggressively keep our resolve in this decades-old war with the terrorists.

Mr. SABO. I come to this House debate deeply frustrated over the chaos in Iraq. I voted against authorizing President Bush to take us to war in Iraq. I believed in 2002, and am more certain today that this war has been a grave mistake.

Mr. Speaker, I have nothing but respect for the honorable American service men and women who have been put into harm's way. However, the goodwill I feel for these brave Americans is contrasted by my lack of confidence in President Bush and the Defense Department leadership. Once they got us into this war, they have, time and again, ignored sound military planning and blatantly disregarded the violent, grinding reality that has steadily descended on Iraq over the past 3 years.

As members of Congress, it is one of our highest duties to hold the civilian and military leadership accountable when they take our nation to war. To date, 2,500 American service men and women have been killed, and more than 18,000 more have been injured. There are no higher stakes than these. Unfortunately, H. Res. 861 does nothing to demand that the Bush administration correct its disastrous policies in Iraq.

Earlier this year, General Anthony Zinni, former Commander of the U.S. Central Command, pointedly expressed the views of many, many Americans about Iraq when he said, “We are paying the price for the lack of credible planning, or the lack of a plan. Ten years worth of planning were thrown away, troop levels dismissed out of hand. . . . These were strategic mistakes, mistakes of policy made back here.”

Mr. Speaker, my constituents and people across the nation want a clear plan for success in Iraq. Americans want to believe that there can be a successful end to this conflict, and that our soldiers, marines and other personnel will return home soon. Unfortunately, it is hard to hold onto this hope given the President's stubborn refusal to acknowledge the failures in his Iraq policy. We must change course.

The United States has a critical role in helping Iraqis to build a peaceful, democratic society. I am certain, however, that an open-ended U.S. military presence in Iraq will not

accomplish peace and stability there. Furthermore, waving the flag, with Congressional resolutions like H. Res. 861, accomplishes nothing.

With mounting casualties and the \$320 billion in spending on this war, Americans deserve to hear the unvarnished truth from their President and elected representatives. I firmly believe that Congressman MURTHA has the right idea with his resolution to redeploy our troops. We must make it clear to Iraqis that we support their transition to a peaceful and prosperous society. Hard-nosed diplomacy, Iraqi institution-building and support from the international community are better tools than the U.S. military to accomplish this goal.

I still seek answers to questions I asked Defense Secretary Rumsfeld in appropriations hearings earlier this year: What is your plan for success in Iraq? When and under what conditions can our honorable men and women serving there come home? The House debate on H. Res. 861 will not provide the answers, and I am still waiting for a thoughtful and credible response from Secretary Rumsfeld.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to discuss H. Res. 861. The Republican leadership has been promising for weeks that the House would have a genuine debate about the future of U.S. military involvement in Iraq. Given that promise, I am disappointed that H. Res. 861 is a truly hollow effort. Despite the eloquent words used, the resolution has no legally binding impact. It does nothing to require a re-evaluation of U.S. policies in Iraq or to change the status quo. It does nothing to address the mistakes that have been made in Iraq. The American people, particularly our troops serving honorably in difficult circumstances in Iraq, deserve more than cheerleading and sloganeering. Unfortunately, empty promises are all this resolution offers.

A vote for this resolution is a vote for the status quo. It is a vote for staying indefinitely in Iraq, perhaps a decade or longer. It is a vote for continuing with the current policies with no end in sight. I cannot support endorsing the status quo. On March 21, 2006, President Bush actually said that the question of bringing home U.S. troops from Iraq “will be decided by future presidents,” signaling that U.S. troops will not be home until 2009 at the earliest. The American people need to understand that a vote in favor of this resolution is a vote to stay in Iraq until at least 2009.

Let me address my specific concerns with the text of the resolution.

First, I am concerned that the resolution inappropriately lumps Iraq in with the so-called global war on terror. It was Osama bin Laden and al-Qaeda who attacked the U.S. on September 11, 2001, not Saddam Hussein and Iraq. I believe it was a mistake to move intelligence and military assets away from the fight against al-Qaeda, which did not have a presence in Iraq prior to the U.S. invasion, in order to attack Iraq. Iraq did not pose a direct threat to U.S. national security, had not attacked the U.S., and could be contained with sanctions, inspections, and no-fly zones.

Second, and perhaps of most concern, the resolution endorses keeping U.S. troops in Iraq until there is a “sovereign, free, secure, and united Iraq.” By that standard, the U.S. will be in Iraq for a decade or more. That is unacceptable and unnecessary. And, in fact, it undermines U.S. national security by indefinitely tying up U.S. intelligence and military

assets that could be better used finding Osama bin Laden and breaking the back of al-Qaeda around the world.

The U.S. cannot impose freedom, security, and unity in Iraq by force. Those worthy goals can only be achieved by the Iraqi people themselves, which will only happen when the Iraqi people and their leaders decide to put aside their sectarian differences. The U.S. cannot force Sunnis, Shias, and Kurds to make peace or to act for the common good. They have been in conflict for 1,400 years. Nor should the U.S. military be forced to remain in Iraq essentially as an army for one side of a civil war. As long as the U.S. military remains stuck with the president's pledge of unending, open-ended support, Iraqi politicians and security forces will use the U.S. presence as a crutch. Establishing a timeline to bring the bulk of our troops home and redeploy others to fight al-Qaeda would force the Iraqi people, politicians and security forces to resolve their differences, establish an effective and inclusive government, end sectarian violence and create a secure society. The U.S. military cannot solve the sectarian problems in Iraq. Only the Iraqis can.

Proponents of the resolution say that those like me who want our troops to come home are defeatist and want to cut and run from Iraq.

To the contrary, I believe the U.S. military has already done all that has been asked of them. Saddam Hussein is on trial. The threat from alleged weapons of mass destruction programs in Iraq has been neutralized. The programs do not exist, and didn't before the war for that matter. The Iraqi people have written and adopted a new constitution and elected a new government. It is time to turn over control of the country to the Iraqi government, Iraqi security forces, and the Iraqi people to build their own future.

Second, the resolution contains the blatantly false assertion that negotiating a timeline for bringing U.S. troops home with the Iraqi government undermines U.S. national security. Such a statement shows a misunderstanding of the enemy we face in Iraq.

Although today the president and proponents of this resolution fail to distinguish between the various enemies we face in Iraq, in a speech on December 12, 2005, the president actually did make important distinctions between the insurgent elements in Iraq. He mentioned “rejectionists,” which are mostly Sunni Arabs who miss the privileged status they enjoyed under Saddam Hussein. He mentioned “Saddamists,” who are former regime elements who want to return to power. Again, they are Sunni Arabs. And, he mentioned foreign terrorists affiliated with or inspired by al-Qaeda, which even the president acknowledged was the “smallest” element of the insurgency. The one huge element he left out was nationalist Shias, such as those influenced by Moqtada al-Sadr.

The reality is that the rejectionists, Saddamists, and nationalist Shias, who combined make up the vast bulk of the insurgents in Iraq, have no interest in attacking the U.S. homeland. They just want U.S. military forces out of their own country. They have no designs on our country. So it is misleading, at best, to argue that if we don't fight the insurgents there, we will fight them in the streets of the United States. Even the foreign terrorist elements in Iraq seem more focused on igniting a Shia-Sunni civil war in the Middle East

and attacking regimes they consider infidels in the region, such as the Jordanian monarchy.

It is also misleading to pretend that if the U.S. leaves that somehow Osama bin Laden will take control of Iraq. There is no chance that the Shias and Kurds, who represent around 80 percent of the population in Iraq, will allow foreign terrorist elements to take over the country. Even the majority of the Sunnis have grown tired of foreign terrorists operating in Iraq.

With respect to the argument about waiting us out, as long as the Sunni, Shia and Kurds cannot resolve their political differences, violence will continue in Iraq. It is not a matter of whether we're there or not. It is ridiculous to assume that the insurgent elements will stop attacking once a timeline for bringing U.S. troops home is announced and will wait to start again until after we leave.

I believe that negotiating a timeline for bringing U.S. forces home is a prerequisite for stabilizing Iraq over the next several months.

Announcing the termination of the open-ended U.S. military commitment in Iraq and providing a concrete plan, including a timeline negotiated with the Iraqi government, for bringing our troops home would undermine support for insurgents. Public opinion polls show that nearly 9 in 10 Iraqis support announcing a timeline for U.S. withdrawal and 70 percent want the U.S. out by the end of 2007. The U.S. cannot want to stay in Iraq more than the Iraqis themselves want us there.

As, the Commander of U.S. forces in Iraq, General George Casey, testified to Congress last year, "the perception of occupation in Iraq is a major driving force behind the insurgency." A specific withdrawal plan, with benchmarks for measuring success in stabilizing Iraq, could unite Iraqis, Sunni, Shia and Kurd, against the foreign terrorists operating in Iraq. That would be a key turning point in stabilizing the country.

A timeline for bringing U.S. troops home that is negotiated with the Iraqi government would also boost the Iraqi government's legitimacy and claim to self-rule, and force the Iraqi government to take responsibility for itself and its citizens. Negotiating a timeline and strategy with the Iraqi government could, more than possibly anything else, improve the standing of the Iraqi government in the eyes of its own people, a significant achievement in a region in which the standing of rulers and governments is generally low.

Similarly, establishing a firm timeline for bringing our troops home could accelerate the development of Iraqi security forces and deepen their commitment to defending their own country and their own government. It would eliminate the conflict they now feel by working with what many of them see as an occupying force. It would allow them to defend a sovereign Iraqi government, rather than fight alongside U.S. forces.

A plan to bring the bulk of our troops home from Iraq and free up intelligence and defense assets to redeploy to fight al-Qaeda, particularly in Afghanistan and along the Afghanistan-Pakistan border, could also help the United States in our broader fight against Islamic extremists with global ambitions. It would make the U.S. safer by taking away a recruiting tool and training ground. Former Director of the CIA, Porter Goss, testified to Congress that, "Islamic extremists are exploiting the Iraqi conflict to recruit new anti-U.S. jihadists.

These jihadists who survive will leave Iraq experienced and focused on acts of urban terrorism." He went on to say, "The Iraq conflict, while not a cause of extremism, has become a cause for extremists."

In addition to a timeline, I have proposed that U.S. troops be removed from front line combat positions in Iraqi cities and towns, turning over daily security patrols, interactions with citizens, and any offensive security actions to the Iraqis themselves. The training and equipping of Iraqi security forces should be accelerated. The U.S. must renounce any U.S. interest in constructing permanent U.S. military bases in Iraq. It is also important to accelerate reconstruction spending and grant the bulk of reconstruction contracts to local companies employing Iraqis rather than multinational corporations, whom have proven inefficient, inflexible, sometimes fraudulent and have even imported workers rather than employing Iraqis. The U.S. embassy in Baghdad should also be reduced to normal size and authority rather than establishing one of the largest embassies in the world.

Third, I am concerned that the resolution continues to mislead the American people, about the threat posed by Saddam Hussein. Saddam Hussein was a brutal tyrant. I am glad he is now on trial for crimes against humanity. But, opposition to a dictator is not the measure I use when deciding whether to send our men and women in uniform off to war and possible death. For me, there must be a direct threat to U.S. national security to justify the sacrifice of the blood and wealth of fellow Americans. In the case of Iraq, I didn't see that. The resolution claims that Hussein "supported terrorists" and "constituted a grave threat against global peace and security." Saddam Hussein did pay the families of Palestinian suicide bombers. So in that sense he did support terrorists, but he did not support the terrorists who attacked the U.S. The 9/11 Commission and other experts have found no operational links between Iraq and al-Qaeda. Further, as I previously mentioned, Saddam Hussein did not have weapons of mass destruction programs and could be contained by sanctions, inspections and no-fly zones.

Finally, I would like to bring my colleagues' attention to a survey of 100 top foreign policy experts just released by the Center for American Progress and Foreign Policy magazine. The survey indicates that despite the cheerleading we're hearing on the House floor today, the U.S. is not winning the war against Islamic terrorists and Iraq has undermined our efforts. More than 80 percent of the experts surveyed believe the U.S. is becoming less safe. Even 71 percent of the self-identified conservative experts said the U.S. is not winning the war on terror. Twenty-eight percent of respondents, including 26 percent of the conservatives, said the Iraq war is the principal reason the U.S. is less safe, second only to the more generic reason of rising Muslim hostility toward the U.S. An astonishing 87 percent of respondents, including 69 percent of conservatives said that the war in Iraq has had a negative impact on U.S. security and nearly 60 percent said the U.S. needs to put more focus on bringing our troops home. The results of this survey of top foreign policy experts from across the ideological spectrum are sobering and directly contradict the blind optimism and endorsement of the status quo that is reflected in H. Res. 861.

It is unfortunate that the Republican leadership continues to prohibit an open and honest debate about the fight against radical Islamic terrorists like al-Qaeda, and the distinct issue of the best strategy for bringing our troops home from Iraq. The American people deserve better.

Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, I join my colleagues in honoring those serving in our Armed Forces in Iraq and Afghanistan, and all the civilians serving here at home and abroad to protect America from terrorism.

With the support of their families, the brave men and women of our Armed Forces have performed their duties with professionalism and distinction. They and their families deserve the gratitude of this nation. We especially honor, and will never forget, the more than 2,500 Americans who have made the ultimate sacrifice in our nation's service. And their families have our enduring sympathies for their loss.

To honor all who have taken an active part in the war in Iraq and the fight against terrorism in Afghanistan and around the world, it is the duty of Congress to aggressively pursue the most effective strategy for winning the Iraq War by demanding accountability for poor planning, mismanagement, and lack of oversight, in addition to developing a new direction that includes a responsible redeployment of U.S. Forces.

While I agree with most of the content of H. Res. 861, I cannot vote in favor of it because it does not acknowledge the need for a new direction in Iraq. This resolution was offered without any opportunity for amendment, preventing the House of Representatives from holding a full and fair debate on the most important matter facing our nation today. Our troops, and all Americans, deserve a better and more responsible debate. While I will not support this resolution, I will always continue to stand by our troops and their families.

Mr. MICHAUD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak against this politically motivated resolution. Our country is under a real and serious threat from extremists. We do not have time to waste on cheap political resolutions that distract us from the unity and sense of purpose that we should all have together, as Americans, in confronting the real threat.

We need to have a real debate on real solutions to determine an effective course of action in Iraq. An honest debate does not undermine our soldiers' morale, as some have suggested in an attempt to silence all questions. What is actually demoralizing to our service men and women is to be sent into harm's way lacking body armor and supplies and a definitive plan for success; and then coming back as veterans only to be harassed by creditors because the VA did not take steps to protect them, or not receiving the necessary treatment for medical issues like PTSD.

In fact, a real, open discussion of the facts on the ground and the challenges we face globally would show our soldiers that we are serious about this endeavor and their safety and that we want to be successful. That is good for our troops.

The way our current debate on Iraq is conducted, with resolutions like this, hurts all of us—this is political grandstanding. We can no longer allow political leaders to shield a badly conducted policy in Iraq behind the cloak of 9/11.

We were attacked on 9/11, and we had a united country and a united world join together in approval as we sought to stop the terrorists in Afghanistan. This had nothing to do with Iraq. And now, five years later, we find ourselves with a divided nation, and few allies who support our policies. This has everything to do with Iraq.

Despite the courage, dedication and professionalism of our men and women in uniform, our military has been strained as a result of the poor and extremely shortsighted leadership of the Secretary of Defense. Recruitment is down. Our National Guard has assumed a greater burden in military operations than ever before and as a result our homeland security is weakened.

The invasion of Iraq and our continuing occupation has damaged our standing in the world. Abu Ghraib, massive civilian casualties, lawlessness and little economic hope in Iraq have undermined the global support that we had to hunt down and destroy terrorists around the world. The war has not made us safer from terrorists—it has created more terrorists. 90 percent of the insurgents in Iraq are Iraqi. The sad reality is that we have created thousands of terrorists where there were none before.

But a review of these errors does not solve the problems. Now, we must look forward. We must ask, what is the best course for our Nation, our soldiers, and the Iraqi people? A policy of "Stay the course" does not address the real situation on the ground in Iraq. It does not provide a clear and understandable path to success and to bringing our troops home. It does not help us to address the damage that we have seen to our moral authority around the world and it certainly does not provide a plan to destroy al Qaeda and similar terrorist organizations.

Instead, we must have a new course in Iraq, a way of instituting fundamental change in our role there, and a way of removing our military presence. It is time for the Iraqi people to take full control of their country. The United States military cannot act as the dominant security force in Iraq indefinitely. I believe, as many leading military experts do, that our presence in Iraq incites and perpetuates the violence. We need a timeline for withdrawal so that the elected government of Iraq can fully assume its duties in the political, economic, and security arenas.

The principle of our efforts must be this: that we cannot want a free and stable Iraq more than the Iraqis themselves do. It is time for them to take control of their own country, and their own destiny.

I strongly believe that we must continue to support the efforts of the Iraqi people to establish a free, secure and sovereign state, but we cannot do this by occupying the country and dominating its internal security and economic development. International cooperation, economic aide, security training, and assistance for infrastructure development should be our aims.

Too many American and Iraqi lives have been lost. Too much money has been diverted to this endeavor instead of going toward hunting down al Qaeda and other terrorist organizations, who are the true enemies of our American freedom.

It is time for us to move forward together, in support of our soldiers, in support of the Iraqi people, with the support of our allies, and in

the firm belief that with a change in approach in Iraq, we can secure greater freedom and prosperity here and abroad.

Mr. SODREL. Mr. Speaker, Sir Winston Churchill once said "An appeaser is one who feeds a crocodile—hoping it will eat him last." We followed the process of appeasement with terrorists for too long. We ignored the jihadists for too long, and they finally arrived on our soil.

Let me highlight a few examples of terrorist attacks for which we responded with appeasement.

December 21, 1988, Pan American Airlines Flight 103 was blown up by a bomb over Lockerbie, Scotland killing all 259 passengers on board;

February 26, 1993, an Islamic terrorist group attempted to blow up the World Trade Center using a bomb in an underground garage;

August 7, 1998, bombs exploded simultaneously in front of U.S. Embassies in Kenya and Tanzania killing 12 U. S. citizens and injuring thousands of innocent bystanders;

On October 12, 2000, they attacked the USS *Cole* while docked in Aden, Yemen killing 17 sailors and injuring 70 others.

After the loss of the World Trade Center and the attack on the Pentagon on September 11, 2001 our military was finally ordered to take the fight to the terrorists.

When a new recruit is inducted into the U.S. military he or she takes an oath. In part this oath pledges the soldier, sailor or airman to "protect and defend the United States Constitution from all enemies foreign and domestic." If I had to distill the U.S. Constitution down to a single word I would define it as "liberty."

Young Americans fought and died at Trenton and Yorktown to achieve liberty. They died at Gettysburg and Vicksburg to extend liberty to all Americans. They gave their all at Normandy and Iwo Jima to restore liberty to people they did not know. Throughout American history Americans have stood up to the enemies of liberty.

In my youth I heard the President of the United States say "Let every nation know, whether it wishes us well or ill, that we shall pay any price, bear any burden, meet any hardship, support any friend, oppose any foe, to assure the survival and success of liberty." That President was John F. Kennedy. He knew the value of liberty. As part of the "The Greatest Generation" he risked life and limb in defense of liberty.

The Greatest Generation spent 144 percent of our Gross Domestic Product defending liberty. Not 144 percent of the Federal budget, but 144 percent of the total annual output of goods and services in our country. Over 400,000 young Americans died in the effort. There are 9,387 crosses in the American cemetery on the bluffs overlooking the beaches of Normandy. The Greatest Generation of Americans was willing to pay any price, and bear any burden, in defense of liberty.

We have some people today who know the price of everything and the value of nothing. Has liberty depreciated so much? Is she worth less to us than she was to our parents? And their parents? Shall we tell those who lay at Flanders' fields we are not willing to support any friend, and oppose any foe, to make the world safe and secure for liberty?

Anyone who does not understand that Osama bin Laden is an enemy of liberty, de-

cludes himself. Anyone who believes al Zarqawi was not determined to kill liberty is feeding the crocodile. The value of anything is determined by the price paid. For Americans throughout our nation's history we would not sell our liberty for any price. For our Founders it was worth their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor.

It took us 13 years after the start of our revolution to adopt our current constitution. The Iraqi people are progressing to a constitutional government at a comparatively rapid rate. I have a great deal of respect for those who are willing to serve in their government. Serving in our government often brings verbal abuse. Serving in the Iraqi government is often life threatening for them and their families. And I have the utmost respect for those serving in the U.S. military and coalition forces.

Mr. Speaker, as a young man grows up he is often confronted with bullying and intimidation. When my son, Noah, was a little boy I gave him two rules on fighting. The number one rule is: We don't start fights. I told him if I ever caught him bullying or picking a fight I would make him regret it. Looking for a fight is unacceptable behavior for our family. He asked me what the second rule was. I told him we don't lose fights. If he finds himself in a fight he did not instigate, if he is engaged in a fight through no fault of his own, then I expect him to win.

We did not ask for this fight, Mr. Speaker. The people who went to work at the World Trade Center on September 11 were not trying to pick a fight. The Americans at the Pentagon weren't spoiling for one. The enemies of liberty after being fed for two decades came to eat us at last. We all want our soldiers, sailors and airmen home safely, but not until the job is finished. Appeasement is not a logical policy and losing is not an option.

Mr. CAMP of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, throughout the centuries a test of the human spirit has arisen; a test of our foresight; and, a test of our most basic, fundamental belief that we are endowed by our Creator with inalienable rights that no person—through tyranny, terror or any other mechanism—may deprive another.

Today, we face a new evil that is unique in history. It comes not in the form of another nation. It calls radicalism home, while living in every country, spreading quietly like a cancer awaiting the most opportune time to strike.

The question we face is simple: Will we rise to that challenge or will we exit the arena leaving future generations to battle a more emboldened enemy?

We, as Americans, are blessed as a free people and are obliged to defend liberty. It is an inherited responsibility that does not end at our borders; and while the major battlefield is halfway around the globe, it is a challenge that cannot be dismissed by distance—a fact the last two World Wars should have taught us well.

On September 11, 2001, terrorists, in a murderous rage, sought to shake our foundation in hopes we would abandon the cause of freedom. Since that bloody day, our men and women in uniform have not only answered our Nation's call to duty; they have not only served ably and nobly; but they, like thousands of American soldiers before them, have responded without hesitation to freedom's call for help and they have followed her voice into the darkest corners, bringing new life and new light to generations of the oppressed.

Today, because of their actions Afghanistan is rid of the Taliban; Iraq has been released from the iron grasp of Saddam Hussein; Osama bin Laden has been sent scurrying; and, his "Prince of Al Qaeda," Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, has been delivered to his final fate.

After nearly two decades of being left virtually unchecked, we are now fighting back and beating back the terrorists. This is not a war on paper; it is a war with real costs and real lives are being lost—not the least of them the more than 3,000 innocent civilians who were murdered on 9/11.

We owe them and the men and women now serving on the front lines who have given the ultimate sacrifice an un-repayable debt of gratitude. We must live our lives in such a way as to be worthy of their sacrifice and we must pick up their cause and see it through to the end.

Make no mistake about it, the debate we are having today is an important one. The war we wage will dictate the course of human freedom for years to come. We can allow the terrorists to turn Iraq into a safe haven from which they can hatch and launch their plans to destroy our way of life, or we can create a stable Iraq that is an ally to free and democratic nations around the globe.

At every turn the people of Afghanistan and Iraq have made the right choice. Despite threats of violence, Iraqis voted not once but twice in national elections to establish a new government with new leaders. They have now completed the formation of that government and are on the brink of reclaiming their country.

My friends, I choose to continue to support our new friends, the Iraqi people, in their struggle. I choose to support our men and women in uniform. And, I choose to stand steadfast in this global war on terror.

I urge my colleagues to join with me and support this resolution.

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to support H. Res. 861 and to stand beside the members of our armed services who have gallantly fought and died for our freedom.

Early in the morning on September 11, 2001, our Nation was at peace. Then at mid-morning a group of terrorists attacked us. What had we done to deserve such an attack? We saved the world from fascism in the 1940s; then rather than punish our enemies, we helped them rebuild their war-torn countries. We saved the world from communism and helped those who were trapped in darkness behind the Iron Curtain see the light of freedom. We are the world's first responders to every emergency, but because a group of murderous cowards hate our way of life, our liberty, and our compassion and values, they attacked us.

Last September, I traveled to Iraq and had the privilege of seeing firsthand our troops' brave actions in combating terrorism. I spent a great deal of time listening to them and learning their perspectives. And these perspectives are contrary to what the American people hear from the media.

Their morale is extremely high and they are proud to serve their country. They believe that we are winning the fight against terrorism and that perseverance and patience will ensure our long-term victory. The most moving part of my trip came when I visited the Air Force Theater Hospital in Balad, Iraq. I was not surprised, but deeply touched, to see that all

those I spoke with who were wounded in combat were eager to return to their units.

Mr. Speaker, I respect every Member's opinion on this extremely important subject. However, I submit that we cannot say we support our troops and also continue this overheated political rhetoric about Iraq being a mistake or an "un-winnable war." This undermines the efforts of our troops and jeopardizes our mission—just as was done during the Vietnam war. Having served on active duty for 4 years in the early 50s, I understand that.

Our brave men and women are winning this fight for us in the streets of Baghdad so we don't have to face terrorists on the streets of America. As long as I am in this body, I will continue to fight for our troops and veterans and I ask my colleagues to do the same.

Mr. KILPATRICK of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to H. Res. 861, the global war on terrorism resolution. I am opposed to the resolution because it is terribly flawed, nonbinding, and does not provide a viable plan that protects our soldiers or serves our country.

The general assumption is that the debate on the global war on terrorism, GWOT, will be a full and honest debate. In fact, the process we are engaged in represents nothing more than an exercise in rhetoric. H. Res. 861 is flawed because it does not reflect bipartisanship. Democrats were not allowed to offer our substitute or amend the Republican resolution. Further, I strenuously disagree with the language contained in the resolution.

I want to strongly emphasize that the failed Republican policy in Iraq includes poor planning that left troops without critical equipment, and provided no plan for success. The war in Iraq exemplifies gross mismanagement, as evidenced by \$9 billion that is either lost or stolen and cannot be accounted for. There has been no oversight of spending to date. The Republican controlled Congress has refused to oversee military conduct and the policy that contributed to the war. There has been a complete lack of accountability regarding this war. No investigating committee has ensured taxpayer dollars were legally and well spent. This administration is guilty of entering into no-bid contracts, totaling \$17 billion to Halliburton alone.

Let me be clear, Democrats want and demand a new direction in Iraq. We want a responsible redeployment of U.S. troops to take place immediately. We must redeploy and be ready.

I disagree with the resolution premise that the U.S. will prevail in the Global War on Terrorism due to the fact that the "terrorist adversary" cannot be identified or quantified. The misguided perpetrators of terrorism consist of disparate and loosely confederated groups, some of whom are religious zealots that justify their terrorist actions based on their Islamic beliefs; others are mercenaries seeking to retaliate against the U.S. for our invasion of Iraq. The terrorists identified as members of Al Qaeda led by Osama bin Laden do not adhere to a traditional command and control military structure, thereby making it impossible for our military forces to engage in traditional battlefield strategies.

H. Res. 861 presents the proposition that Saddam Hussein's regime supported terrorists and posed a threat to global peace. There is no documentation to support this premise. These allegations have been wholly disproved,

yet supporters of the war and the architects of the resolution continue to propagate these mistruths. This is why today I reaffirm my steadfast opposition to another in a long list of resolutions that seek to delude Americans into believing that we are debating legislation that provides a clear direction to winning the so-called global war on terrorism. This resolution does not.

I oppose this resolution because it does not address the fact that to date we have spent in excess of \$368 billion, mainly in the form of supplemental spending bills that are off-budget and contribute mightily to the Federal deficit. The resolution does not address that our President, the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Defense, and the National Security Agency, NSA, all provided the American public with undeniably wrong information and allegations contrived to seduce them and Members of Congress to support an act of aggression against Saddam Hussein. We engaged in a war without broad international support. America, through its actions in Iraq, reinforced the perception throughout the Middle East that the global war on terrorism is an attack on the religion of Islam, and in some measure that the interests of the U.S. related more to controlling oil in Iraq than promoting democracy. This war has united our enemies and divided our friends.

I reject this resolution because it does not acknowledge that we hastily entered this war and unnecessarily placed our soldiers in harm's way, resulting in 2,500 deaths.

My ongoing assessments of the situation in Iraq have caused me to conclude that it is critical for the House and our nation to develop a strategy that will ensure the redeployment of our forces from Iraq and return them home. I support my colleague Representative MURTHA and his calls for a reevaluation of our military strategy and a return of our troops as soon as practicable. As our troops redeploy, they will be ready to respond to whatever challenges our Nation may be forced to confront.

Finally, I oppose H. Res. 861 because it will not deliver any tangible solutions to the quagmire that engulfs our soldiers and places them in perpetual danger. H. Res. 861 provides the appearance of substantive and honest debate. In reality, it is merely an exercise designed to appease the emotional and intellectual appetite of Americans seeking to justify what they believe and have been told is a real global war on terrorism. It is not.

I urge my colleagues to vote "no" on H. Res. 861.

Mr. OXLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of House Resolution 861, expressing our continued dedication to the global war on terror and the brave men and women serving on the front lines in that war. Alongside their counterparts from across the world, they have worked on our behalf to confront terrorist elements and foster freedom in the name of peace and stability.

I want to focus my remarks on the extraordinary efforts of the Bush administration to improve our Nation's intelligence-gathering capabilities and prevent future terrorist attacks. Armed with the new tools Congress provided in the Use of Force Resolution, the USA PATRIOT Act, and other intelligence laws, our military, law enforcement, and intelligence communities have scored many successes in the last 4 years. Their efforts to track terrorist networks and decipher their plans have broken up sinister plots here at home and around

the world. An FBI supervisor has confirmed that the PATRIOT Act led to the breakup of an al Qaeda cell in suburban Buffalo, NY. And just a few days ago, months of painstaking information gathering by U.S., Iraqi, Jordanian, and other sources resulted in the killing of the terrorist mastermind Abu Musab al-Zarqawi.

For all the well-earned kudos that have been heaped upon the military and intelligence communities for their successful mission against Zarqawi, most of their successes aren't widely known and can't be publicly broadcast. The intelligence community can't take credit for them for fear of giving away secrets about their modes and methods of gathering this valuable information.

Which is why the revelation in the media last year of the National Security Agency's terrorist surveillance program was an outrageous breach of national security.

This leak—timed to coincide with Congress's debate on reauthorizing the USA PATRIOT Act—let al Qaeda and other terrorist groups know that the NSA had been intercepting the international communications of individuals with links to their groups.

Then-CIA Director Porter Goss confirmed before the Senate Intelligence Committee that the damage caused by the leak has been "very severe," leading to the loss or disruption of some sources and methods—not to mention the damage caused to our relationships with our intelligence counterparts in other countries.

This program has provided valuable intelligence on terrorist activities. CIA Director Michael Hayden, who oversaw this program at the NSA, stated "unequivocally" that we have obtained information through the terrorist surveillance program that would not otherwise have been available.

It's also consistent with Congress's direction that the President use "all necessary and appropriate force" against nations, groups, and individuals found to be responsible for the 9/11 attacks. We have tracked and intercepted calls in cases where we have reason to believe that at least one party in the conversation is a member of al Qaeda.

The program is also fully compliant with existing law, and has been reviewed by the Justice Department and White House counsel roughly every 45 days. Congress has been briefed regularly on its provisions, consistent with the National Security Act of 1947. Chairman PETE HOEKSTRA has confirmed that congressional leadership, along with the leaders of the two intelligence committees, had numerous opportunities to express concerns about the program.

Sadly, rather than giving the administration credit for working to gather intelligence and "connect the dots," the outrage of some in this Congress has been directed not at those who leaked information about the program, but at the NSA and the White House. Unbelievably, four of our colleagues in the other body even introduced a resolution to censure the President over this program—a program that, had it been in place before 9/11, could have led the NSA to locate and identify two of the 9/11 hijackers who settled in San Diego in 2000.

It's simply irresponsible to claim that this program is outside the administration's authority, since leaders of both parties have had every opportunity to express misgivings over the last 4½ years. Frankly, it smacks of political grandstanding that criticisms were raised

only after the program's existence was leaked to the New York Times.

Some have tried to minimize the significance of this leak, saying that terrorists obviously know that we're spying on them. But the truth is that terrorist cells need to communicate, and they'll keep using methods of communication that they know to work—and stop using methods that have been compromised. You can guarantee they'll move on to other modes of communication, now that details of the terrorist surveillance program have been publicized.

It also defies logic to suggest that the privacy of communications with known terrorists is constitutionally protected. Just like in every military conflict our Nation has fought, the interception of enemy communications has been a fundamental part of the war on terror. The day after Pearl Harbor, President Franklin Roosevelt authorized the interception of all communications into and out of the United States. That act was necessary and lawful—as is this more focused interception of al Qaeda communications, given the nature of the enemy we face.

Future al Qaeda attacks on our homeland are likely to be conducted by operatives who are already here. Identifying and tracking them is a sizable challenge, and it's preposterous to suggest that our intelligence professionals will cast such a wide net that they threaten the privacy of ordinary American citizens in doing this work. They don't want useless information that takes them off the trail of criminals and terrorists; they have neither the time nor the resources to waste. They're constantly working against the clock to counter terrorists and terrorist sympathizers who are preparing to attack when and where they can.

As a special agent of the FBI, I conducted wiretaps. They're wrapped in layers of legal protections and never done without probable cause. The NSA's actions simply give intelligence services the same wiretap authorities that have been available to those fighting organized crime and drug lords. Americans not in contact with al Qaeda can be assured that their rights have not been violated.

Even as we debate this legislation, terrorist groups are plotting to kill Americans. If the NSA tracks a call from a known terrorist in Afghanistan to a phone number somewhere in the U.S., it's in our best interest to know who's on the other end of that call and what they're talking about.

This is no time to let our guard down or publicize details of our clandestine intelligence work. The fact that we have not had a major terrorist attack in this Nation since 9/11 is no accident. The focused efforts of our intelligence officials have helped detect and prevent attacks, and we as a nation are safer as a result. They deserve our gratitude, as do all of our service men and women serving on our behalf on all fronts in the global war on terror.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, the rationale for the Bush administration's going to war in Iraq has been one of shifting sands.

The first reason given for the action in Iraq was that it was necessary because Iraq possessed weapons of mass destruction, which turned out to be wrong. Then the rationale was the threat of nuclear weapons from Iraq's alleged purchase of uranium from Africa, which also was not true and was seriously questioned within the Bush administration before the military action.

Then it was said that there was a linkage between the Iraqi regime and the perpetrators of 9/11, a claim that has never been found to be true. The evidence is that al Qaeda did not have a presence in Iraq until after the President ordered military action in Iraq.

The Republicans try to paint Democratic opposition to the administration's Iraq policies as a reflection of refusal to use force. That is absolutely not true. It is a question of under what conditions and circumstances. That was at the heart of the debate over Iraq before the action was taken.

In 2002, a majority of Democrats voted for an alternative resolution allowing the President to undertake military force in Iraq, but only after first attempting a multilateral approach to dealing with Saddam Hussein through the Security Council, just as the first President Bush did in 1991. What Democrats rejected was implementation of an approach emphasizing the use of unilateral, pre-emptive military action by the U.S.

That approach has had a number of consequences: terminating inspections before the inspectors could fully disclose that there were no WMD; the twisting of truth about the lack of an Iraqi program of developing nuclear weapons and the lack of a connection between the Iraqi Government and 9/11; a belief that military action would not only be easy to begin with, but would lead to rapid development of a democracy in Iraq; inadequate equipment to safeguard our troops from the dire consequences of guerilla and radical insurgent attacks; and a vast and deep distrust of our Nation among peoples of the Middle East, Europe and elsewhere.

The situation in Iraq is not getting better. It's getting worse. As of today, 2,500 American soldiers have been killed in Iraq. Nearly 18,000 of our soldiers have been wounded. Tens of thousands of Iraqis have died. Iraq is teetering on the brink of a full-fledged civil war. Sectarian killings have risen rapidly.

This resolution represents a seal of approval of the Bush administration's approach to Iraq. I oppose it. It is essential that we change the course, not simply stay the course, and adopt policies that heighten the pressure to bring about that change and accelerate the reduction of American military involvement in Iraq.

Mr. ISRAEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise with respect to this resolution, H. Res. 861.

Mr. Speaker, I pride myself on being unapologetically supportive of a robust military. I do believe that President Wilson was correct when he said the United States can help make the world safe for democracy. I believe that we must stand decisively against totalitarianism in whatever form it takes—and today, it takes the form of a twisted misinterpretation of Islam that is radical, extremist, and murderous. And nothing is more important to me, as a member of the House Armed Services Committee, than supporting and honoring our troops.

Sadly and cynically, Mr. Speaker, the resolution before us has not been drafted to unify the American people around these principles. It has been drafted to divide the American people based on politics.

This resolution—a nonbinding sense of the House—is not a policy statement. It is a political strategy. It is designed not to win the war in Iraq, but to win elections at home.

First, Mr. Speaker, let there be no mistake about the legislative intent of this resolution.

It is a sign of this Republican leadership that they would introduce a resolution on an issue as critical as the war in Iraq; then refuse to include in that resolution a single idea, a single solution, a single policy that would actually win the war in Iraq; then refuse to allow sufficient debate or even consideration of alternative resolutions that would demonstrate our national resolve as well as our constructive ideas on how to prevail.

Who can be against the resolution's operative statement: "Declaring that the United States will prevail in the global war on terror, the struggle to protect freedom from the terrorist adversary"?

Who can be against the clause in the resolution that states that we "Honor the sacrifices of the United States Armed Forces" . . . that we "call upon the nations of the world to promote global peace and security"?

But the Republican leadership, in their callous attempt to politicize the war in Iraq has inserted other language that is troubling.

A clause I find questionable, Mr. Speaker, is this: "Whereas Iraqi security forces are taking over from United States and Coalition forces a growing proportion of independent operations and increasingly lead the fight to secure Iraq";

In fact, Mr. Speaker, there are reports that Iraqi Security Forces are not significantly leading independent operations. Proportionately, Iraqi security forces are performing fewer combat operations than just 6 months ago.

Mr. Speaker, the Majority should have worked on a bipartisan basis to write a plan to find Osama Bin Laden, and catch or kill him.

If the Republican Majority wanted near unanimity, they would have removed these clauses, or at least refined them. They would have allowed us to offer alternative language. They would have offered to hold bipartisan consultations to find language that would unite Congress and the American people.

Instead, they put partisanship ahead of bipartisanship on an issue that demands cooperation from both sides of the aisle: the war on terror, the war in Iraq, the well-being of our troops, the honor of their sacrifices.

Mr. Speaker, let me make two final points.

First, about the importance of honoring our troops. I passionately agree with the resolution's call for honoring our troops. In fact, while the House debated this resolution on the floor yesterday, I secured a public commitment from the Army at an Armed Services Committee hearing that they would end the shortages of life-saving coagulant products that help our soldiers from bleeding to death. Every day for the past 2 weeks I have been working on this issue.

It is proper that we pass a non-binding resolution honoring our troops. But I have secured a commitment from the Army to bind their wounds. So I will not take second place to anyone in this body on the issue of supporting and honoring our troops. And I am insulted that some of the very same people who rail about not degrading the morale of our troops will use the vote on this resolution to degrade the morale of our troops.

Second, Mr. Speaker, instead of passing non-binding resolutions that are political documents, let us pass a binding policy to win the war on terror. The resolution we should be voting on today would require the President to certify to Congress that number of Iraqi forces that have reached combat proficiency, and re-deploy an equivalent number of U.S. forces. It

would commit some of those forces to containing the growing resurgence of the Taliban in Afghanistan and finding, once and for all, the murderer who escaped our grasp and started the real war on terror—Osama Bin Laden. It would commit ourselves to properly funding our troops so that no American citizen has to dig into their own pockets and mail life-saving coagulants to our troops because they were not properly equipped.

Indeed, Mr. Speaker, if those who wrote this resolution spent more time unifying us around those principles and less time dividing us on political rhetoric, we might be out of Iraq by now, and relentlessly finding, capturing and killing those who masterminded the attacks on our country in Afghanistan and elsewhere.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. FOLEY). Pursuant to House Resolution 868, the resolution is considered read and the previous question is ordered on the resolution and on the preamble.

The question is on the resolution.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. BOEHNER. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 256, nays 153, answered "present" 5, not voting 19, as follows:

[Roll No. 288]

YEAS—256

Aderholt	Crenshaw	Hayworth
Akin	Cubin	Hefley
Alexander	Cuellar	Hensarling
Baker	Culberson	Hерger
Barrett (SC)	Davis (KY)	Hersteth
Barrow	Davis (TN)	Higgins
Bartlett (MD)	Davis, Jo Ann	Hobson
Barton (TX)	Davis, Tom	Hoekstra
Bass	Deal (GA)	Holden
Bean	Dent	Hostettler
Beauprez	Diaz-Balart, L.	Hulshof
Berman	Diaz-Balart, M.	Hunter
Berry	Doolittle	Hyde
Biggart	Drake	Inglis (SC)
Bilbray	Dreier	Issa
Bilirakis	Edwards	Istook
Bishop (GA)	Ehlers	Jenkins
Blackburn	Emerson	Jindal
Blunt	English (PA)	Johnson (CT)
Boehlert	Etheridge	Johnson (IL)
Boehner	Everett	Keller
Bonilla	Feeney	Kelly
Bonner	Ferguson	Kennedy (MN)
Bono	Fitzpatrick (PA)	Kind
Boozman	Flake	King (IA)
Boren	Foley	King (NY)
Boswell	Forbes	Kingston
Boucher	Fortenberry	Kirk
Boustany	Fossella	Kline
Bradley (NH)	Fox	Knollenberg
Brady (TX)	Franks (AZ)	Kolbe
Brown (SC)	Frelinghuysen	Kuhl (NY)
Brown-Waite,	Gallely	LaHood
Ginny	Garrett (NJ)	Larsen (WA)
Burgess	Gerlach	Latham
Buyer	Gibbons	LaTourette
Calvert	Gilchrest	Lewis (KY)
Camp (MI)	Gillmor	Linder
Campbell (CA)	Gingrey	Lipinski
Cantor	Gohmert	LoBiondo
Capito	Goode	Lucas
Cardoza	Goodlatte	Lungren, Daniel
Case	Gordon	E.
Castle	Granger	Lynch
Chabot	Graves	Mack
Chandler	Green (WI)	Manzullo
Chocola	Green, Gene	Marchant
Coble	Gutknecht	Marshall
Cole (OK)	Hall	Matheson
Conaway	Harris	McCarthy
Cooper	Hart	McCaul (TX)
Costa	Hastert	McCrery
Costello	Hastings (WA)	McHenry
Cramer	Hayes	McHugh

McIntyre	Price (GA)	Smith (WA)
McKeon	Pryce (OH)	Snyder
McMorris	Putnam	Sodrel
Melancon	Radanovich	Souder
Mica	Ramstad	Spratt
Miller (FL)	Regula	Stearns
Miller (MI)	Rehberg	Sullivan
Miller, Gary	Renzi	Sweeney
Moore (KS)	Reynolds	Tancred
Moran (KS)	Rogers (AL)	Taylor (MS)
Murphy	Rogers (KY)	Taylor (NC)
Musgrave	Rogers (MI)	Terry
Myrick	Rohrabacher	Thomas
Neugebauer	Ros-Lehtinen	Thompson (MS)
Ney	Ross	Thornberry
Northup	Royce	Tiahrt
Norwood	Ryan (WI)	Tiberi
Nunes	Ryun (KS)	Turner
Osborne	Salazar	Upton
Otter	Saxton	Walden (OR)
Oxley	Schmidt	Walsh
Pearce	Schwarz (MI)	Wamp
Pence	Shadegg	Weldon (FL)
Peterson (MN)	Shaw	Weldon (PA)
Peterson (PA)	Shays	Weller
Petri	Sherwood	Westmoreland
Pickering	Shimkus	Whitfield
Pitts	Shuster	Wicker
Platts	Simmons	Wilson (SC)
Poe	Simpson	Wolf
Pombo	Smith (NJ)	Young (AK)
Porter	Smith (TX)	Young (FL)

NAYS—153

Abercrombie	Hooley	Pastor
Ackerman	Hoyer	Paul
Allen	Inslee	Payne
Andrews	Israel	Pelosi
Baca	Jackson (IL)	Pomeroy
Baird	Jackson-Lee	Price (NC)
Baldwin	(TX)	Rahall
Becerra	Jefferson	Rangel
Berkley	Johnson, E. B.	Reyes
Blumenauer	Jones (OH)	Rothman
Brady (PA)	Kanjorski	Roybal-Allard
Brown (OH)	Kaptur	Ruppersberger
Brown, Corrine	Kennedy (RI)	Rush
Butterfield	Kildee	Ryan (OH)
Capps	Kucinich	Sabo
Capuano	Langevin	Sanchez, Linda
Cardin	Lantos	T.
Carnahan	Larson (CT)	Sanchez, Loretta
Carson	Leach	Sanders
Clay	Lee	Schakowsky
Clyburn	Levin	Schiff
Conyers	Lewis (GA)	Schwartz (PA)
Crowley	Lofgren, Zoe	Scott (GA)
Cummings	Lowey	Scott (VA)
Davis (AL)	Maloney	Serrano
Davis (CA)	Markey	Skelton
Davis (FL)	Matsui	Slaughter
Davis (IL)	McCollum (MN)	Solis
DeFazio	McDermott	Stark
DeGette	McGovern	Strickland
Delahunt	McKinney	Stupak
DeLauro	McNulty	Tanner
Dicks	Meehan	Tauscher
Doggett	Meek (FL)	Thompson (CA)
Doyle	Meeks (NY)	Tierney
Duncan	Michaud	Towns
Emanuel	Millender-	Udall (CO)
Engel	McDonald	Udall (NM)
Eshoo	Miller, George	Van Hollen
Farr	Mollohan	Velázquez
Fattah	Moore (WI)	Visclosky
Filner	Moran (VA)	Wasserman
Ford	Murtha	Schultz
Frank (MA)	Nadler	Waters
Gonzalez	Napolitano	Watson
Green, Al	Neal (MA)	Watt
Grijalva	Oberstar	Weiner
Harman	Obey	Wexler
Hastings (FL)	Oliver	Woolsey
Hinchey	Ortiz	Wu
Hinojosa	Owens	Wynn
Holt	Pallone	
Honda	Pascrell	

ANSWERED "PRESENT"—5

Boyd	McCotter	Sherman
Jones (NC)	Miller (NC)	

NOT VOTING—19

Bachus	Carter	Johnson, Sam
Bishop (NY)	Cleaver	Kilpatrick (MI)
Bishop (UT)	Dingell	Lewis (CA)
Burton (IN)	Evans	
Cannon	Gutierrez	

Nussle  
Reichert

Sensenbrenner  
Sessions

Waxman  
Wilson (NM)

# ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). Members are advised that 2 minutes remain in this vote.

□ 1117

Mr. OBERSTAR and Mr. KENNEDY of Rhode Island changed their vote from "yea" to "nay."

So the resolution was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated against:

Ms. KILPATRICK of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, on Friday, June 16, 2006, had I been present, I would have voted "nay" on H. Res. 861, the resolution on the War in Iraq.

Mr. CLEAVER. Mr. Speaker, had I been present for rollcall vote 288, for H. Res. 861, I would have voted "nay" on this non-binding and toothless sham of a resolution, that was not a meaningful legislative document.

## PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. CARTER. Mr. Speaker, on June 15, 2006, I was unable to be present for rollcall vote 287 due to a family emergency.

On rollcall vote No. 287, if present, I would have voted "aye."

On June 16, 2006, I was unable to be present for rollcall vote 288 due to the same family emergency.

On rollcall vote No. 288, if present, I would have voted "yea."

## PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I was regrettably unable to be on the House Floor for rollcall vote 288, final passage of H. Res. 861: Declaring that the United States will prevail in the Global War on Terror, the struggle to protect freedom from the terrorist adversary. Had I been able to be here I would have voted "aye" on rollcall vote 288.

We are in a world war against terrorism, a world war, and Iraq is a major battlefield of that war right now. The reason we are not being attacked in large part here in the United States, in my opinion, is because our young men and women in uniform serving in Iraq are making sacrifices over there, in the middle of the storm, where terrorism has its genesis, where Iran and Syria and other countries are supporting terrorism. The terrorists and their state-sponsors do not want democracy to flourish over there, because they know their days will be numbered if democracy succeeds. The killing of Al Qaeda leader Abu Musab al-Zarqawi shows that our young men and women fighting over there are making the terrorist days numbered, in my opinion.

I would like to just make one quote from Sir Winston Churchill, when I think about my colleagues on the other side of the aisle and they start talking about how we have to get out of there right now. Sir Winston Churchill, who was one of the greatest leaders of the 20th century, he said in a speech that he made entitled "We Shall Fight on the Beaches," which is very famous, he says: "Wars are not won by evacuations." You do not win by retreating.

## REMOVAL OF NAME OF MEMBER AS COSPONSOR OF H.R. 4157

Ms. ESHOO. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that my name be withdrawn as a cosponsor of H.R. 4157, the Health Information Technology Promotion Act.

The SPEAKER. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from California?

There was no objection.

## LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM

(Mr. HOYER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise for the purposes of inquiring of the majority leader the calendar.

I yield to my friend Mr. BOEHNER, the majority leader.

Mr. BOEHNER. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the whip for yielding.

Next week we will convene on Monday at 12:30 for morning hour and 2 o'clock for legislative business. We will consider several measures under suspension of the rules. A list of those will be sent out by the end of today. Any votes called on these will be rolled until 5 p.m. on Monday. I want to repeat that: 5 p.m. we will vote on Monday.

For the balance of the week, the House will consider on Tuesday, the Department of Defense appropriation bill; Wednesday, the Voting Rights Act, the reauthorization and several amendments; and on Thursday, we will do the legislative line item veto.

I will remind Members there are no votes next Friday.

Mr. HOYER. I thank the leader for his information.

The leader and I had a brief conversation, as you recall, with reference to the time when we would vote on Monday. I know that you have considered that, but I would again reiterate, as you know, one of the problems is in order for a Member on the west coast to get here, they need at least until 5:30 to be assured of being available for a vote. I know you must have considered this.

Mr. BOEHNER. If the gentleman would yield.

Mr. HOYER. I yield to my friend.

Mr. BOEHNER. We have discussed it. It is somewhat problematic, but I think what I would say to my colleague is let me keep working with you to see if we can't come to some agreement. I think 6 o'clock would be too late but 5:30 may work. We will continue to work with you on that.

Mr. HOYER. I thank the gentleman. I look forward to working with him on this to accommodate those Members on the west coast in particular.

There is a change in the announced schedule with regard to first votes, as we have discussed, and I appreciate your responding to that.

With respect to the Labor-Health bill, it was our expectation that the

Labor-Health-Education appropriations bill, which was reported out of committee this week, would be on the floor this coming week. As you know, that included within it a bipartisan-approved increase in the minimum wage, by \$2.10, to \$7.25 over the next 30 months. I notice that that bill is not on the schedule for next week. Can you tell me the status of the Health and Human Services appropriations bill?

I yield to my friend.

Mr. BOEHNER. We are continuing to work with the appropriators, trying to resolve some issues in order to find a way to bring it to the floor, but we do not expect to consider it next week.

Mr. HOYER. I thank the gentleman for that information.

If I might follow it up, we would very much hope that the amendment that was adopted, and we believe is supported by over 80 percent of the American public, would be protected under the rule. We obviously understand that it is legislation on an appropriation bill and would require a waiver, as many have been given in the past. I would respectfully request that you look at that and, in light of the fact of the bipartisan support in the committee, seriously consider and hopefully give a waiver so that that matter may be considered on the floor with a vote by the membership.

If you have any comment, I would be glad to yield.

Mr. BOEHNER. I understand your interest.

Mr. HOYER. It will be continuing. I thank you.

We understood next week was supposed to be health care week. Yet no health care legislation is listed. For example, the Health IT or the bill authored by Mr. SHADEGG are not on your announcement. When do you anticipate we may see either of these pieces of legislation on the floor?

Mr. BOEHNER. We were hoping to do that Health IT bill next week. We have got some scoring issues and some what we believe are problems with CBO that we are trying to iron out. So I would expect hopefully those will be ironed out next week and possibly bring that bill up for the following week.

Mr. HOYER. Thank you.

The last question I would ask you, Mr. Leader, you and I have had a discussion. You have been in the leadership of the consideration of the pension reform legislation. Obviously, we all know it is critical to employees, critical to companies. It has been now pending in conference for many, many months. I am wondering whether or not you might give us some thought as to its status and its prospects.

I yield to my friend.

Mr. BOEHNER. As the gentleman knows, I do several media events every week where members of the press routinely ask me every Tuesday and every Thursday the same question, and as you know, this is a very difficult issue. Protecting Americans' pensions and the commitments that have been made